Bengaluru Monday, December 15, 2025 Pages 14 Vol 78 No 345 ₹7

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DH

DECCAN HERALD

The Power of Good

Pacers Arshdeep, Harshit strike

India beat South Africa by 7 wickets to take T20 series lead

Page 13

Gunmen kill 11 at Jewish festival on Australian beach

Police declare it terrorist attack; one shooter killed, another critical

SYDNEY, AGENCIES

Gunmen opened fire at a Jewish holiday celebration at Sydney's Bondi Beach on Sunday, killing at least 11 people in what Australian officials described as a targeted antisemitic attack.

Emergency responders rushed at least 29 injured people to hospitals from the beach, one of the biggest tourist draws in Australia's largest city.

One of the suspects was killed, and the second was in a critical condition, police said. The authorities have declared the shooting a "terrorist incident".

Video footage filmed by onlookers appeared to show two gunmen with long guns firing from a bridge.

One dramatic clip showed someone appearing to tackle and disarm one of the gunmen, before pointing the man's weapon at him.

As gunfire erupted, crowds fled in fear from the beach in eastern Sydney, which draws huge numbers of surfers, swimmers and tourists, especially at weekends.

Emergency services first responded to reports of shots being fired at 6.47 pm (local time).

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese hailed ordinary citizens who tackled and disarmed one of the gunmen as "heroes".

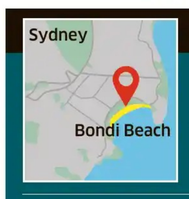
"This is a targeted attack on Jewish Australians on the first day of Hanukkah, which should be a day of joy, a celebration of faith — an act of evil, antisemitism, terrorism that has struck the heart of our nation," Albanese said.

Israeli President Isaac Herzog condemned the shooting as a "cruel attack on Jews" and urged the Australian authorities to step up the fight against antisemitism.

Australia, a country of 28 million people, is home to about 1,17,000 Jews.

A string of antisemitic attacks has spread fear among Jewish communities in Australia following the 2023 Hamas attack on Israel and the ensuing war in Gaza, although the authorities didn't suggest those episodes and Sunday's shooting were connected.

Emergency workers transport a person after a shooting incident at a beach in Sydney on Sunday. AP/PTI



Bloodshed on the beach

- Around 1,000 people in attendance at the Hanukkah event
- Two gunmen start shooting at the crowd
- Firing lasts about 10 minutes, sending hundreds scattered
- 2 cops among 29 in hospital with injuries
- Several suspected IEDs in the vehicle of one of the suspected shooters
- A 43-year-old fruit seller, identified as Ahmed al Ahmed, tackles one of the attackers

> This is a targeted attack on Jewish Australians on the first day of Hanukkah, which should be a day of joy. An attack on Jewish Australians is an attack on every Australian
>
> **Anthony Albanese**
> Australian PM

India's oldest MLA Shamanur no more

NRUPATHUNGA S K
DAVANGERE, DHNS

Shamanur Shivashankarappa (1931-2025)

Veteran Congressman Shamanur Shivashankarappa earned the respect of politicians, irrespective of the party they belonged to. Shamanur, the country's oldest MLA, who passed away in Bengaluru on Sunday due to age-related issues at 94, was undoubtedly Davangere's pride and highly regarded as he steadily scaled the political ladder. He remained in electoral politics till the end and above all, the Davangere South MLA successfully straddled politics and business for many decades.

He is survived by three sons, including S S Mallikarjun, who is also the state Minister for Mines and Geology, and four daughters and MP and daughter-in-law Prabha Mallikarjun. He had been undergoing treatment for age-related ailments at Sparsh Hospital in Bengaluru for a month.

Shamanur, who started his career as a food grain merchant, rose to become one of the richest politicians in the country. He not only owned a private jet, but also ran educational institutions, including two medical colleges, two dental colleges, sugar factories, co-operative banks and others.

▸ Shamanur, Page 4
More reports on Page 4

Plans afoot to shift Jakkur flying school to Mysuru

Cong govt's move may spell doom for aerodrome, benefit real estate interests

DH SPECIAL

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

In a move loaded with historical and political irony, the Congress government has set in motion a proposal to shift the Jakkur Flying Training School, a heritage aviation institution inaugurated by Jawaharlal Nehru in 1949, out of Bengaluru.

The development is likely to alarm aviation experts and heritage conservationists, as the proposed "relocation" may effectively spell the end of flying operations at Jakkur aerodrome, possibly to benefit real estate interests in northern Bengaluru.

By shifting the school, the government not just plans to ease building height restrictions but also to free up the open land for commercial activities.

In a November 2025 letter to the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the state government said it was considering the possibility of shifting the Government Flying Training School (GFTS) from Jakkur to Mysuru aerodrome, the hometown of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

What's more, the government has also constituted an expert committee to examine the proposal in detail.

▸ Jakkur, Page 4

Curtailing the flight?

- Jakkur flying school situated on land gifted by the Maharaja of Mysore specifically for aviation training
- Any deviation from original purpose could attract legal troubles
- During his visit to the flying school in Sept, CM had supported the idea of expanding its runway
- Two months later, the government seems to have changed its stance

A view of the Jakkur aerodrome in Bengaluru.

In surprise move, BJP picks Bihar's Nabin as working prez

SUMIT PANDE
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Nitin Nabin

BJP ended the year-long suspense over the appointment of its next president with the party's parliamentary board, in a surprise move, nominating Bihar Minister Nitin Nabin as its national working president.

A terse two-line press release issued by the BJP central office on Sunday announced that the appointment "comes into immediate effect".

This was followed by a congratulatory message posted on 'X' by Union Home Minister Amit Shah to Nabin "on being appointed the Working President of the BJP" and by PM Narendra Modi, BJP president J P Nadda and others.

▸ Nabin, Page 4

CM skips lunch hosted by high command, fuels speculation

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Siddaramaiah

Amid the ongoing power tussle in the Karnataka Congress, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday skipped a lunch hosted by the Congress top brass in the national capital ahead of the mega "Vote Chori" rally at Ramlila Maidan, raising eyebrows among the party high command.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge hosted the lunch for Congress Working Committee members and other senior leaders at Indira Bhavan, the Congress headquarters, at 1 pm.

All top leaders, including senior leader Sonia Gandhi, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi, and others, were present.

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, who is also the KPCC president, attended it. Though invitations were extended to all Congress-ruled state chief ministers, including from Karnataka, Siddaramaiah skipped the lunch.

▸ Congress, Page 4

Quickly

Internal quota, SC panel bills may be tabled

The government is expected to table the Karnataka Scheduled Castes (Sub-Classification), Bill, 2025 and the Karnataka State Commission for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Amendment) Bill, 2025, in the ongoing Belagavi session of legislature. *DH* has accessed the bills. The sub-classification bill ratifies the 6:6:5 formula for internal quota. The second bill is to amend the SC/ST Commission's functions.
Details on Page 4

Rs 2-cr fine for varsities sans nod: New bill

Anyone setting up a private university or a higher-educational institution without government approval would have to cough up at least Rs 2 crore as a penalty, while the institution could face "immediate closure", according to a new bill. The new Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025, also envisages a Rs 10-75 lakh penalty. It is likely to be introduced in the last week of the Winter Session.
Details on Page 8

H-1B visa: From today, social media on radar

The Trump administration will begin on Monday enhanced screening and vetting of H-1B and its dependent H-4 visa applicants, including checks of their social media profiles. From December 15, a review of the online presence for all H-1B applicants and their dependents will be conducted. Students and exchange visitors were already subject to this and now the State Department has expanded it.
Details on Page 12

Dr. M.S. Ramaiah
Twenty Eighth Punyathithi

The Annual Punyathithi of
our beloved and revered Father
Dr. M. S. RAMAIAH
will be performed at our residence, "Gokula",
on Monday Sri Vishwavasu Nama Samvatsara,
Margashira Bahula Ekadasi, dated 15.12.2025.
We request you to participate in the ceremony
and pray for the departed soul.
Dr. M.R. Jayaram
and Brothers and their families
Programme: Punyaha Vachana : 11.30am
Lunch : 12.30pm

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MLA's assurance keeps Nandan Ground open for all

Residents relieved as football stadium plan dropped

BENGALURU, DHNS

Austin Town residents breathed easy on Sunday after MLA NA Haris clarified that Nandan Ground will not be turned into a football stadium.

A poster outside the century-old BBMP ground in early December announced plans to develop it into a football stadium with an artificial turf. The poster alarmed locals, who feared the turf would lead to privatisation and restrict access to football players only.

Haris visited the ground on Sunday, addressed residents live on Facebook, and announced the ground will remain as it is.

An aerial view of Nandan Ground in Austin Town. A poster outside the century-old BBMP ground in early December announced plans to develop it into a football stadium with an artificial turf. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

He also promised to provide toilets and drinking water for players.

Peoplespeak

Players and activists gathered to meet the Shanthinagar MLA and voice concerns about the stadium proposal.

Clifton D'Rozario, lawyer and community member, said: "We are finally relieved the ground will remain as it is. It is not just for football players, but also for walkers and people playing other sports."

Nandan Kumar, a long-time user, said: "We welcome his decision. We are glad he is looking into providing other amenities, too."

Another resident, Tulasi Raman, said, "The MLA himself met us and clarified he did not intend to convert the ground into turf. After visiting, he said he would refrain from any further plans."

JCBs move into Cantt heritage green site; activists alarmed

Fear tree felling; want land to be developed as biopark

BENGALURU, DHNS

Over a week after the state government withdrew the biodiversity heritage site status accorded to a wooded area near the Bengaluru Cantonment railway station, earthmovers moved into the site on Sunday, triggering fears among environmentalists that its green cover could be destroyed.

The 8.61-acre site, located opposite the city's oldest railway station, had become Bengaluru's second biodiversity heritage site after the Gandhi Krishi Vigyana Kendra (GKVK).

The Forest, Ecology and Environment Department had granted the status on September 9 following protests against the proposed felling of 371 trees to make way for three commercial towers with a total built-up area of nearly 3 lakh square feet.

The land has been leased by the Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA) to Bagmane Texworth Private Ltd for a period of 60 years.

However, on December 6, the Forest Department withdrew the heritage tag with immediate effect. The government was reportedly left with little choice, as retaining the tag would have required paying the Railways compensation amounting to hundreds of crores of rupees.

Mahesh Basapur of Parisarakkagi Naavu, an environmental organisation, said the site has 368 mature trees, some over 70 years old. "JCBs have arrived, and despite our queries, the operators refused to explain their presence. From what we know, forest officials have not yet granted permission to fell the trees," he said.

Earthmovers moved into the 8.61-acre site on Sunday, raising fear among environmentalists over the destruction of its green cover.

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Another environmentalist, Alexander James, said activists want the land to be developed as a biopark. "If development is necessary, it can be used as a public or waiting space, but the greenery must be preserved. When we visited the site, we requested those present not to destroy the trees," he said, adding that environmentalists would meet the tree committee under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) to discuss the issue.

Vinod Jacob, another activist, said the green space was vital for the area. "The surrounding localities are densely populated and witness heavy traffic. In such areas, preserving green spaces is essential," he said, while questioning why the Railways was not redeveloping other land parcels in its possession that are lying in "abysmal" condition.

DT Devare of the Bengaluru Environment Trust said a valuable green space was being compromised to serve vested interests and urged Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre to intervene.

ALL INDIA COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION
(A STATUTORY BODY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA)
Nelson Mandela Marg, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi-110 070
Ph. No. : 011-2958-1000/1050, Website: www.aicte.gov.in

PUBLIC NOTICE

Subject: Verification of AICTE Approval status of an Institution-reg.

The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), a statutory body under the Ministry of Education, Government of India, was established by an Act of Parliament (Act 52 of 1987). It is mandatory for all institutions to obtain prior approval from the AICTE to offer any technical program.

It has been observed that parents, students, and other stakeholders often face difficulty in confirming the AICTE approval status of institutions. To facilitate this, stakeholders are advised to verify approval details directly through the AICTE website www.aicte.gov.in.

It is clarified that, as per the AICTE Act, 1987, and the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India dated 24th September 2001 in Bharathidasan University vs. AICTE, Universities do not require prior approval of AICTE to conduct technical programmes. However, technical institutions affiliated to Universities, Institutions deemed to be Universities, and institutions offering PGDM programmes do require such approval.

AICTE also maintains a list of unapproved institutions based on information received from various sources. This list is published on the AICTE website.

Institutions found conducting unapproved courses are regularly notified through public notices and individual communications, under intimation to the respective State Governments, with directions to either seek AICTE approval or discontinue such programmes. State Governments are also advised to take appropriate action against such erring institutions. Please visit the AICTE website for the detailed Public notice at www.aicte.gov.in.

This notice is issued for the information and interest of the public and all stakeholders.

Advt. No: Regulation Bureau/AICTE/12(01)/2025

(Prof. Shyama Rath)
Member Secretary, AICTE

cbc21300/12/0011/2526

ORR: Long-delayed asphalting of Doddanekundi service road finally begins

BENGALURU, DHNS: After a prolonged delay, asphalting work has begun on the Outer Ring Road (ORR) service road at Doddanekundi, bringing relief to commuters along the busy tech corridor.

The development comes as the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has proposed a separate makeover of the ORR stretch at an estimated cost of Rs 307 crore.

The project traces back to September 2022, when heavy rains across Bengaluru exposed the poor condition of several ORR stretches. Inspections at the time highlighted the need to asphalt the entire ORR, prompting a budget proposal from the Mahadevapura Zone to the civic authorities.

1st phase almost done

The first phase of funding covered the Marathahalli–Iblur stretch, where work is now nearing completion, including asphalting of service roads on both sides. With the release of the next tranche of funds, work has now commenced at Doddanekundi.

Officials said desilting of roadside drains and resetting of kerbstones and footpath pavers are underway. Brushed concrete footpaths will be constructed in select stretches, while asphalting has already started on the Doddanekundi service road and the middle lane beneath the flyover.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

CULTURAL

Concert: Ilayaraja to attend; MVT Hall, ISKCON, Hare Krishna Hill; 11 am.

RELIGIOUS

Sermon: 'Srimadbhagavatha'; Vadirajachar Mannur; Vyasaraja Mutt, 5th Main Road, Subramanya Nagar; 6 pm.

Sermon: 'Gurugunastavana'; Sri Raghavendra Swamy Mutt, Malleswaram; 7 pm.

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST
Mist

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	28.0°C
Minimum	14.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	43%
Sunset (Dec 15)	5:55 pm
Sunrise (Dec 16)	6:33 am
Moonrise	1:45 am
Moonset	1:46 pm

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

Invites to be published in thiscolumn should be sent to:
incitytoday@deccanherald.co.in.
Please note that hard copieswill not be accepted

Need a hand? Write to us

Letters of grievances are pouring in and we are doing our best to accommodate as many as possible. Readers may write in to highlight civic problems affecting their locality and we will help address them in an interactive and effective manner.

Grievances and issues related to public utility agencies such as Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) and Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (Bescom) would be highlighted in the weekly column.

The writeups, which could be accompanied by photographs highlighting the problems, will be published on Mondays. Mail your grievances to: peoplesproblems @deccanherald.co.in

Monkey menace

A troop of 8–10 monkeys camps atop the apartment buildings, damaging water tanks, taps, plants, and other property.

For the past few months, residents of Golden Enclave Phase 1 (A and B blocks), located in Soundarya Layout, 15th Cross, have been facing problems due to the increasing menace of monkeys in the area.

The monkeys frequently enter the apartment complex, litter the premises, and pose serious safety risks to children and senior citizens.

A troop of nearly 8–10 monkeys camps on top of the apartment building during the day, attacking multiple houses and causing damage to water tanks, lids, taps, plants, and other property.

On several occasions, the monkeys have even barged into flats through open windows.

In view of the growing safety concerns and property damage, we request the forest department and civic authorities to take immediate action to safely capture these monkeys and relocate them to the Bannerghatta park or a nearby forest area.

Dasam Venkata Reddy
Soundarya Layout

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On-the-spot registrations start at 8:30 AM onwards.
Walk in, register, and get quiz-ready!

HAPPENING TODAY!

Time	Venue
9:00 am	RV Auditorium (RV Teachers College), Rashtriya Vidyalaya Rd, 2nd Block, Jayanagar, Baby Dolne, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560011

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Associate Sponsors: Siddaganga, Margadarsi Chits (Karnataka) Private Limited
TV partner: Asianet Suvarna
Knowledge partner: Quriosity

Request for installation of reflectors on road hump

I would like to draw your attention to the urgent need for installing reflectors on the road hump located opposite Ranga Vilas Hotel, near Dasegowdanapalya, 5th Block, Banashankari 6th Stage.

At present, the road hump is not clearly visible from a distance, making navigation difficult for motorists. This has resulted in accidents.

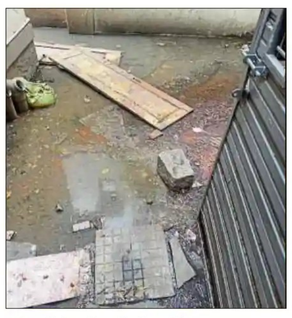
I request the authorities concerned to take immediate action to install reflectors on the road hump to improve visibility and ensure the safety of commuters.

GS Prakash
Banashankari 6th Stage

Blocked drainage pipeline

The drainage pipeline on Shanti Road in Shanthinagar is completely blocked. As a result, sewage water is flowing back into homes and contaminating the drinking water supply, posing a serious health hazard to residents.

Despite repeated complaints raised with the local MLA and the BWSSB, no remedial action has been taken so far. The ongoing issue is causing severe inconvenience and health concerns for residents of Shanthinagar, Andree Road, and the surrounding areas.



The blocked pipeline causes sewage to flow back into homes, contaminating the drinking water supply.

I request the BWSSB to take immediate action to replace the old and blocked drainage pipeline.

Palani Velu
Shanti Road, Shantinagar

Relocation of post office appreciated

We, the residents of Padmanabhanagar, would like to express our gratitude to the Department of Posts for relocating the post office from Banashankari 2nd Stage to the newly constructed building near the 15A bus stop in Padmanabhanagar.

This relocation fulfils a long-pending demand of the residents.

The new location has brought considerable relief, especially to senior citizens, as they no longer need to travel to Banashankari 2nd Stage for postal-related work.

SG Prabhakar
Padmanabhanagar

Failed PSI aspirant poses as cop, plots robbery

BENGALURU, DHNS: A failed police sub-inspector aspirant and three accomplices allegedly barged into an elevator technician's house in northwestern Bengaluru and robbed him. Police arrested all four.

Mallikarjuna H, 27, a Ballari native who did not qualify in the PSI exam, and three accomplices entered the house of Naveen KA in Vidyaranyapura around 11.30 pm on December 7.

Mallikarjuna wore a police uniform stitched at a tailoring shop in Kamakshipalya.

His three associates, Pramod V, 30, Vinay HT, 36, and Hrithvik P, 24, were in plainclothes. They introduced themselves as crime investigators and accused Naveen of peddling drugs. Despite Naveen's resistance, they searched his house, assaulted him, and filmed the incident.

They later forced Naveen to transfer Rs 87,000 to their bank account and took away Rs 55,000 in cash, according to a police complaint lodged on December 9.

Vidyaranyapura police registered a case under BNS Section 311 (robbery or dacoity with attempt to cause death or grievous hurt) and arrested all four.

Rs 45K recovered

Hrithvik had told Mallikarjuna about Naveen, and they planned the robbery. Police have recovered only Rs 45,000, but impounded a car and a two-wheeler.

Rapid-response vehicles launched to tackle KSRTC bus breakdowns, accidents

BENGALURU, DHNS: Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy on Saturday flagged off Accident Emergency Response Vehicles to provide quick aid during bus accidents and breakdowns.

Each vehicle, costing Rs 7.22 lakh, will serve as a mobile workshop to repair KSRTC buses involved in accidents or breakdowns en route, he stated.

Two vehicles will be stationed in Bengaluru and Mysuru to enable rapid response to accidents and breakdowns in Bengaluru, Tumakuru, Kolar, Chikkaballapur, Mysuru, Mandya, and nearby areas.

When buses break down or develop faults, these vehicles will help ease traffic congestion.

Technical staff will be dispatched from the Kempegowda Bus Station and Mysuru Road Satellite Bus Stand to reach accident or breakdown sites quickly with spare parts and equipment.

More vehicles

These vehicles will also provide immediate aid to drivers and conductors and help shift the injured to hospital, KSRTC said.

By January, 10 more vehicles will be inducted and deployed across the remaining districts in phases, KSRTC said.

No delay in civic body polls: Govt clarifies amid GBA Act amendment

Concerns over proposed nomination of over 650 members

BENGALURU, DHNS

The state government has dismissed allegations that elections to the five city corporations under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) would be delayed due to the proposed nomination of over 650 members, terming such claims "baseless" and "misleading".

The Urban Development Department (UDD) said the proposed amendments to the Greater Bengaluru Governance (Second Amendment) Bill, 2025, neither violate constitutional provisions nor seek to indefinitely appoint nominated members to city corporations.

It clarified that the provision for nominating members applies only to newly added local areas that are yet to undergo ward re-delimitation and elections.

Under the Greater Bengaluru Governance Act, 2024, the outer limits of the GBA can be modified by including new local bodies.

Until such areas are re-delimited and elections are held, they would otherwise remain without representation in the city corporation concerned, the department said.

To address this, the amendment allows the nomination of at least one ordinary resident for every 20,000 population in newly added areas as an additional member. These nominated members will not have voting rights and will serve only until elections are conducted.

The department noted that similar provisions exist under Section 360(D) of the Karnataka Municipalities Act, 1964, which allows nomination of residents when panchayat areas are merged into urban local bodies. As the delimitation of 369 wards has already been notified, it said there is no scope for nominating members for these wards.

To prevent indefinite nominations, the government has proposed timelines mandating re-delimitation of newly included areas within three months and the conduct of elections within six months of their inclusion.

The government added that it has already notified the Greater Bengaluru Governance (Elections) Rules, 2025, and the Voters Registration Rules, 2025, and that the State Election Commission has begun preparations for ward-wise electoral rolls.

"At a time when all necessary steps are being taken to conduct general elections to the five city corporations, dissemination of incorrect information is not justified," the department said.

CHRISTMAS BEGINS

St John's Church choir fills the historic walls of Bengaluru's 1858 church with a blend of traditional and contemporary carols on Sunday, kicking off Christmas celebrations. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

Two women killed in accident

BENGALURU, DHNS: Two women were killed after being hit by a car while crossing the road near the Hosakerehalli toll on NICE Road on Friday, police said.

The deceased have been identified as Rangamma (45) and Chaudamma, residents of RR Nagar. Both were natives of Yadgir district and worked as labourers with a private contractor in the city.

The incident occurred around 6.15 pm when a speeding SUV knocked them down as they were crossing the road on their way home.

The driver fled the spot following the accident. However, Kengeri traffic police later traced and identified the suspect as Satyanarayana. Further investigation is on.

KBG fumes over slow work on airport metro line

Minister conducts another inspection of Blue Line construction

BENGALURU, DHNS

Over a week after reviewing metro construction on the airport line, Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda (KBG) conducted another inspection on Sunday morning, covering the stretch between Nagawara and Bagalur Cross stations.

He reviewed the work at Nagawara, Veeranapalya, Hebbal, Esteem Mall Junction, Allalasandra, Jakkur Aerodrome, Byatarayanapura and Kodigehalli.

Expressing anger over the slow pace of work, Gowda pulled up NCC Limited — the contractor for the Benniganahalli-Kempapura section.

Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda during his inspection of the airport metro line on Sunday. PHOTO: KBG'S OFFICE

"There has been no progress for two years. Does it take two years to build one pillar? And now you claim you will do magic in two months? Where is the pillar? Am I blind?" he is heard telling officials in videos shared by his office.

He expressed displeasure at indefinite road closures and traffic diversions, and how they were putting people to hardship. He noted that road closures were "unnecessary" at many places.

"Why do you block the road if no work is going on? Don't block the road if you can't do the work," he says in another video.

The minister instructed officials to remove a transformer placed on the footpath and the directed National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to remove footpath encroachments and complete the service road. Following his instructions, officials removed encroachments from several places.

Gowda instructed metro authorities to immediately begin footpath development near Byatarayanapura Junction, and directed BMRCL and NHAI officials to clear blockages at Kodigehalli, his office said in a statement.

During his first inspection on December 3, Gowda had asked aloud whether building a metro pillar was rocket science, while senior BMRCL officials listened.

Gowda represents the Byatarayanapura assembly constituency, which includes parts of the 58.18-km Silk Board Junction-KR Pura-Airport stretch on the Blue Line under Phase 2A/2B.

Construction on the KR Pura-KIA metro corridor was held up for nine months in 2023 due to a fatal accident in HBR Layout.

While construction has picked up, the BMRCL cannot make up for lost time as it's facing a shortage of construction workers, according to a senior official.

On the Benniganahalli-Kempapura section, pier work is 75% complete, caps, beams and tiebeams 62%, and girders 34%. For the Kempapura-Yelahanka stretch, the respective figures are 92%, 75% and 63%. The progress between Yelahanka and the airport is 97%, 95% and 88%, respectively, according to BLR Metro Tracker.

The BMRCL plans to open the Blue Line in three phases. The Silk Board-KR Pura (19.75km) section will open by December 2026, Hebbal-airport (27.44 km) in June 2027, and KR Pura-Hebbal in December 2027.

K'buragi may get K'taka's first leopard conservation reserve

CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS

Karnataka is likely to get a dedicated reserve for the conservation of leopards with the Kalaburagi division taking the lead in identifying a first patch of forest land for the purpose. Officials have proposed 2,877 acres of undisturbed area in the 6,410-acre forest in Chittapur taluk for a start. This was done after a camera trap study in the area showed the presence of four to five leopards and several other species of wildlife.

"The small patch of undisturbed dry deciduous forest is relatively small. But it's a start. Apart from leopards, it is home to several other animals. The government can further add contiguous forests in the neighbouring division (Yadgir)," said Kalaburagi Deputy Conservator of Forests Sumitkumar Shubashrao Patil.

Leopards are highly adaptive and have learnt to thrive even in city fringes. However, the proposal leads with big cats in the hope of protecting other wildlife in the area.

"It is important to bring the dimension of wildlife management to the rich ecology of the forest. North Karnataka is home to so many wild animals. We want to highlight it. Instead of seeing this forest as a territory, we want to bring the dimension of wildlife management," Patil said.

A lake which falls under Ashnal forest in Chittapur taluk, where the reserve is proposed.

Apart from spotted deer and blackbuck, the Ashnal block of forest where the reserve is proposed, and its neighbouring blocks, are known for wolf, wild dog, hyena, fox and jackal.

Officials believe that bringing more areas from wildlife management will help plan conservation beyond plantation. Patil said the proposal has received a positive response from locals and people's representatives.

Consultation was held with people during gram sabha in Allur and neighbouring villages. Later, officials in the revenue department and district-in-charge minister Priyanka Kharge, who also represents the area, endorsed the idea. "We want people's participation to be at the core of this effort. The conservation management committee comprising local representatives of the reserve will take a call on the major decisions concerning the reserve," he said.

Besides an anti-poaching camp, the reserve tag is expected to push the department to engage with the public by conducting awareness programmes. Further, plans have been drafted to take up research projects in the area.

The proposal was placed before the state board of wildlife and the standing committee of the board discussed it last month. "After a detailed discussion, the standing committee decided to defer the proposal, with instructions to produce a comprehensive proposal after technical assessment for perusal," the minutes of the meeting said.

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BEYOND STEM

41 'STREAM' labs to make students future-ready

BELAGAVI, DHNS

In a first for public schools in Karnataka, the state government will set up 41 advanced labs across the Kalyana Karnataka region to introduce key concepts of futuristic science and environmental sustainability to students.

These facilities will be known as Science, Technology, Robotics, Ecology, Astronomy and Mathematics (STREAM) labs and will be named after India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru.

Making the announcement on Sunday, Science and Technology Minister NS Boseraju said the 41 Assembly constituencies in Kalyana Karnataka will get a Nehru STREAM lab each.

"Collaborating with the Kalyana Karnataka Regional Development Board (KKRDB), the project moves beyond traditional STEM learning by introducing a unique curriculum that blends high-end futuristic science with environmental sustainability," Boseraju said in a press release.

STREAM

- Science and Technology
- Robotics (Hands-on automation and coding skills)
- Ecology (Practical fieldwork involving local biodiversity and sustainability studies)
- Astronomy (Exploring the cosmos)
- Mathematics (Advanced problem solving)

Special inclusion

- Quantum physics (Basic conceptual exposure)

The decision comes at a time when the Winter Session of the legislature is going on in Belagavi, and several discussions have centered around the continuing backwardness of the North Karnataka region.

The project has a budget of Rs 3 crore and will cover the seven districts in the Kalyana Karnataka region.

Stating that introducing basic exposure to quantum physics at school level was a first, the minister noted that the initiative aimed to spark curiosity about the "fundamental nature" of the universe.

This will also be a "first-of-its-kind initiative where students get practical exposure to local flora, fauna, and their immediate environment".

Dr Ajay Dharam Singh, KKRDB chairman and Congress' Jevargi MLA, noted that the move intended to ensure that rural students have the same scientific temper and opportunities as their urban counterparts.

Power game? CM skips Congress...

Congress, From Page 1

As planned, after the lunch, all leaders proceeded to the rally ground in a show of strength. While the CM was not available for comment on skipping the lunch, the party leadership also made no statement.

However, a senior Congress leader in Delhi said the conspicuous absence of Siddaramaiah could also be seen as an attempt by the Karnataka CM to send a signal to party leadership in the midst of the ongoing tussle with his deputy on leadership change.

According to the schedule, the CM was supposed to leave HAL Airport in Bengaluru on a chartered flight at 10 am on Sunday and land in Delhi at 12.30 pm.

However, the flight took off at 10.30 am, landed at 1 pm, and he reached Karnataka Bhavan at 2 pm. At Karnataka Bhavan, he had lunch as per his minute-to-minute programme.

After lunch, he went straight to the rally at Ramlila Maidan. After the event, he drove directly to the airport and boarded a special flight at 5.15 pm for Belagavi without meeting any leaders.

Interestingly, Himachal Pradesh CM Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu and Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy not only attended the lunch but also addressed the rally.

Several state presidents also spoke at the event. Both Siddaramaiah or Shivakumar did not address the Ramlila Maidaan rally.

Shivakumar, who arrived in the national capital on Saturday, was seen actively mingling with other leaders during the lunch. He even stayed back in Delhi and met Congress General Secretary (in-charge of Karnataka) Randeep Singh Surjewala.

Agri startups struggling to stay afloat after seed funding phase

Only 20% able to scale up in terms of finance, employment

How they fare?
- India has around 2,000 agri startups
- Karnataka has 250 of them
- Agri-startups in state focus on precision agriculture, farm mechanisation, agri logistics and supply, organic farming, etc.
- Only 20% are able to scale up
- 25%-30% face eventual closure

Main issues
- Lack of secondary financial assistance
- Gap in technology adoption
- Lacking agriculture domain experts
- Climate variability
- Lack of marketing network, poor ideation

PAVAN KUMAR H
HUBBALLI, DHNS

Nearly 80% of agriculture-related startups in Karnataka are finding it difficult to stay afloat after the initial seed funding phase.

In the state, agri startups are venturing into sectors such as precision agriculture, farm mechanisation, agri logistics and supply, organic farming, animal husbandry, fishery, among others.

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), a Union government agency, has registered over 2,000 agriculture-related startups in India.

Around 250 of them are in Karnataka, second only to Maharashtra (300) at the Pan-India level.

Taslimarif Saiyed, Director-CEO, Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP), says only around 20% of the agri startups are able to scale up both in terms of finance and employment, while nearly 25%-30% of the rest face eventual closure due to the sector's complexity.

He says that out of the 100 agri startups that are registered with C-CAMP, 25 have already scaled up in terms of revenue and global market share.

Lack of secondary financial assistance, gap in technology adoption, a lack of agriculture domain experts, high compliance, climate variability, need for user understanding of advanced technology, a lack of marketing network, and poor ideation are resulting in nearly 20% of agri startups winding up within two-three years of initiation, he says.

C-Camp hosts the Centre of Excellence for Agri Innovations, which is supported by the ITBT and agriculture departments of the Karnataka government, to comprehensively encourage agri startups.

Ravi Shankar, an agro-consultant, says agriculture is a complex subject and is riddled with multiple problem statements. "The higher the problems, means more opportunity for startups to find solutions."

He attributes this to changing market dynamics that are often driven by climate change, requiring the agri startups to be agile and responsive.

"Many of the startups that started in Karnataka were incubated in the urban set-up with a limited understanding of agriculture. A few of the startups also failed to capture the market and scale up as they lacked marketing experience."

Experts say that large numbers of startups are fading out as they have limited access to funding, high upfront costs and long gestation periods. Though the state government has been providing Rs 5 lakh seed funds for a majority of startups, a poor business model has meant that they failed to get secondary investment.

Manjunath R, founder of Future Biotech, a Dharwad-based startup that was incubated at the Krishik-Agribusiness Incubator of University of Agriculture Science (UAS), Dharwad, says acceptance from customers is one of the challenges for organic-based products.

"It takes at least five to six years for a startup to stabilise. However, due to a fund crunch, many are unable to sustain till then," he says, adding that the cumbersome license process is also hurting the cause.

The UAS-Dharwad in the last 12 years has incubated 136 startups. While 90 of them are still afloat, not many of them have been able to break the Rs 1-crore annual turnover bench, says S S Dolli, CEO of Krishik-Agribusiness Incubator.

Market expansion is another challenge for these startups. Sudhanshu Rai, founder of Bengaluru-based Fyllo, an agro-tech startup, says the agri-tech sector has huge potential. However, establishing a market is a challenge. "The government, which has been subsidising agriculture, needs to invest in technology related to agriculture and provide them long-term handholding to improve the income of farmers and sustain startups."

Taslimarif says the government is making significant efforts to fund promising startups even after the initial seeding phase.

"We are working with investors from within and outside countries to fund sectors that can provide greater returns in future and also make agriculture sustainable."

Govt likely to table SC sub-classification Bill today

BELAGAVI, DHNS: The state government is expected to table the Karnataka Scheduled Castes (Sub-Classification), Bill, 2025 and the Karnataka State Commission for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Amendment) Bill, 2025, in the ongoing Winter Session of the Legislature in Belagavi.

DH has accessed both the bills. The sub-classification bill ratifies the government's 6:6:5 formula for internal reservation by dividing SCs into three groups (Group A includes Madigas and 15 affiliated castes, Group B includes Holeyas and 18 affiliated castes and Group C includes Lambani, Bhovi, Korma, Korcha and 59 'most backward' communities).

The bill comes at a time when the government order providing 6:6:5 internal reservation for SCs has been challenged in the Karnataka High Court by the Confederation of Untouchable Nomadic Communities of Karnataka, and the High Court has asked the government to not make final appointments.

"If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of this Act, the government may by order published in the official gazette make provision not inconsistent with the provisions of the Act as appear to be necessary or expedient for removing the difficulty," the Act notes. On October 29, *DH* had reported that a bill was likely to ratify the government order regarding the 6:6:5 formula on internal reservation.

The bill also notes that 6:6:5 formula is also applicable to filling backlog vacancies in public appointments. The bill also notes that provisions of this bill do not affect any posts coming under the Union government.

SC/ST commission bill

According to the SC/ST commission bill, the functions of the commission includes recommending to the government the necessary modification in the reservation percentage of sub-classification to the members of the Scheduled Castes on receipt of new data/information from the government.

BJP picks Bihar's Nabin as working prez in surprise move

Nabin, From Page 1

Nabin's appointment also marks a generational shift in the party as the 45-year-old, five-time MLA from Bankipur in Patna, was heading the Bihar BJP's youth wing till 2019. If the party follows the past template, Nabin, known little outside Bihar, could become the youngest national president of the BJP next month to replace the incumbent JP Nadda, whose tenure technically ended in December 2024. The party national council may meet next month to ratify Nabin's appointment as the national president.

After the BJP's victory in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, Nadda too was appointed as the working president after Amit Shah joined the Modi government as the Home Minister. Six months later, Nadda was officially elevated to the top post.

Nabin is currently the Road Development Minister in Nitish Kumar-led NDA government and belongs to the Kayasth community, an upper caste social group whose population in Bihar, as per the 2023 state socio-economic survey, is less than 1%. His father, Nabin Kishor Sinha, a veteran BJP leader, was a four-time legislator from Patna-West.

As the BJP constitution mandates, the national president can remain in office for two consecutive three-year terms. Nabin could helm the organisation in 2029 when the next Lok Sabha polls are scheduled, as did his two predecessors, Nadda and Amit Shah.

Nabin started his career with the youth wing of the BJP, BJYM, and was later appointed its state president and national general secretary. Interestingly, while Nadda was an alumnus of Patna University, Nabin did his studies in Delhi before cutting their teeth in student politics.

While Nadda was appointed within months of Narendra Modi's second consecutive victory in the 2019 elections with a comfortable majority, Nabin's nomination has been preceded by a protracted gap of over a year and a half after the BJP failed to cross the halfway mark in 2024.

The announcement for the top organisational post in the ruling party comes just days after Mohan Bhagwat, the chief of the RSS, the ideological mentor of the BJP, in an interaction in Chennai, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's successor will be decided by the BJP and Modi ji."

In the past, RSS has played a key role in organisational matters, including the appointment of the Organisation Secretary and the president, from Atal Bihari Vajpayee, L K Advani, M M Joshi, Rajnath Singh, and Nitin Gadkari.

After 2014, the role of the sangh in its political wing has shrunk, with the BJP emerging as the dominant political force in the country.

Earlier this year, at an event organised to mark RSS's centenary year, Bhagwat, on being asked to comment on the delay in the appointment of the BJP president, said, "If we were deciding, would it have taken so long?"

Bizman by choice, politician by chance, Shamanur leaves behind an enduring legacy

DAVANGERE, DHNS

Veteran Congman and six-time legislator Shamanur Shivashankarappa, who passed away on Sunday due to age-related issues, has left behind a rich legacy in state politics and business, embodying the values of humility, integrity and dedication.

As a popular Kannada saying goes 'Aane Nadedidde Daari', Shamanur chose path less trodden and left footprints, be it in business, politics or the welfare of the Lingayat community.

Born to Shamanur Kallappa and Savithramma on June 16, 1931, Shivashankarappa completed his primary education at Old Middle School in Davangere. He quit his education at intermediate level and took up trading of grains on a small scale and with a dedication and unwavering commitment built a business empire at his home turf.

In an interview with sister publication Prajavani, Shamanuru had revealed about his early days in business. "I, along with my father and brother Basavarajappa, started trading in toor dal and bengal gram (chana dal). In those days, I had incurred losses to the tune of Rs 1 lakh. Trading in rice and sugar helped me overcome losses incurred in tur dal business. Then, Shamanur Sangappa and I started a rice mill in partnership in the early 1960s. Initially, we invested Rs 5,000 each and eventually invested Rs 95,000 each in phases. We both were keen on running the mill as a sole business. Hence, it was put out on auction. We sold the mill for a staggering Rs 25 lakh in the auction." And then there was no looking back for Shamanur.

A file photo showing nonagenarian Shamanur Shivashankarappa inaugurating dandiya during Dasara celebrations in Davangere.

> I am a businessman by choice and a politician by chance. I had never dreamt of becoming an MLA, MP or a minister. I was thinking of restricting myself to municipality. But destiny had other plans... I went on to become an MLA, MP and a minister.
>
> **SHAMANUR SHIVASHANKARAPPA**
> Before the 2023 Assembly elections

His business empire now includes Bapuji Educational Association, which runs over 50 institutes including schools, colleges, engineering colleges and medical colleges, and sugar factories & distilleries, hospital and pharma, aviation and sports among others.

An avid cricket fan, Shamanur had successfully bidded for KPL team Shamanur Davangere Diamonds in the inaugural edition in 2009. He was also an honorary president of Davangere cricket and sports club till his death.

Shamanur entered politics through the cooperative sector. He was elected as director of Janata Bazaar in early 1960s. He then became director of urban co-operative society. Shamanur was elected as a member of Davangere municipality in 1969. He became its president from 1971 to 1973.

In 1994, he made his debut to the legislative assembly. He continued to retain Davangere South seat till his death. In 2023 elections, the wheelchair-bound Shamanur defeated BJP's Ajay Kumar by a margin of over 27,000 to become India's oldest MLA at 92. His son S S Mallikarjun retained Davangere North seat while his daughter-in-law Prabha Mallikarjun was elected from Davangere Lok Sabha constituency, the following year.

Shamanur has also served as agricultural marketing and sugar minister in Siddaramaiah's 1.0 cabinet between 2013-16.

Before the 2023 Assembly elections, Shamanur, on his political journey, had said, "I am a businessman by choice and a politician by chance. I had never dreamt of becoming an MLA, MP or a minister. I was thinking of restricting myself to municipality. But destiny had other plans...I went on to become an MLA, MP and a minister."

Shamanur's last rites in Davangere today

BENGALURU, DHNS: The mortal remains of Shamanur Shivashankarappa will be kept for public viewing at the high school field in Davangere from 12 pm to 3.30 pm on Monday. The last rites of Shamanur will be performed with full state honours at Kalleshwara Mill premises on Bamboo Bazaar Road at 5 pm. Top leaders from the state, across the party lines, including CM Siddaramaiah, Deputy CM D K Shivakumar, will attend the funeral ceremony, according to the family sources.

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Thou art gone and forever

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M/s N. K. Subbaiah Setty & Sons
Relatives & Friends.

'An irreplaceable loss': State leaders condole Shamanur's death

BENGALURU, DHNS: Leaders across the political spectrum condoled the death of veteran Congressman Shamanur Shivashankarappa (94).

Taking to X (formerly Twitter), Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said: "I am pained by the demise of former minister, MLA, All India Veerashaiva-Lingayat Mahasabha President and senior party leader Shamanur Shivashankarappa."

Siddaramaiah recalled that Shamanur was away from controversy in his long political career and described him as a leader who dedicated life for people's welfare.

"The works of Shivashankarappa, which made Davangere a model district, will make him immortal in public memory. I pray for the peace of the departed soul and I pray to God that his son S S Mallikarjun and his family get the strength to bear this loss," the chief minister added.

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar expressed his condolences on 'X' and described the veteran Congressman as a leader who dedicated his entire life to social service.

Expressing his condolences on X, former chief minister B S Yediyurappa recalled Shamanur as an "elder brother" and a senior politician.

He said Shamanur's death was an irreplaceable loss for Davangere district and the All India Veerashaiva Mahasabha.

Union Heavy Industries and Steel Minister HD Kumaraswamy also expressed his sadness at the veteran's demise.

In a post on X, he said: "I am deeply pained by the news of the demise of senior politician, former minister, industrialist and gentleman Shamanur Shivashankarappa. He was a leader I personally respected a lot." Kumaraswamy said that Shamanur was loyal to the Congress party.

Shamanur represented the Davangere South constituency in the current Assembly. His son SS Mallikarjun is the mining minister, while his daughter-in-law Prabha Mallikarjun is the Davangere MP.

India's oldest MLA...

Shamanur, From Page 1

It was his uncle Shamanur Shivappaa who had encouraged him to face the elections to the then Davangere city muncipal council. He was elected member of the CMC in 1969. Later, he became head of CMC in 1971.

Having become head of the District Congress Committee in 1975, he had developed good rapport with Congress leader Devaraj Urs. When Congress split due to Urs' rift with then prime minister Indira Gandhi, the former CM fielded Shamanur as Urs Congress nominee in the Lok Sabha polls held in 1980. However, Shamanur lost against then Congress nominee T V Chandrashekharappa. In 1986, he became KPCC treasurer, a post he held for more than two decades.

Congress then fielded Shamanur by replacing incumbent MLA Yajaman Moti Veeranna in 1994. Shamanur registered his maiden victory in the Assembly polls against BJP nominee by around 1,350 votes. He was pitted against the then BJP nominee G Mallikarjunappa in 1998 in the Lok Sabha polls and managed to win with 3,43,704 votes.

However, in the 1999 Lok Sabha polls, Mallikarjunappa exacted revenge by winning with 3,98,969 votes. Following Mallikarjunappa's death, his son Siddeshwara entered the fray as BJP nominee in 2004 and emerged victorious against Shamanur's son S S Mallikarjun with 3,70,499 votes.

Interestingly, it was the maiden election for both Siddeshwara and Mallikarjun. Shamanur emerged victorious in the 2004 Assembly elections and has not lost an Assembly election since then.

Following delimitation, Davangere was divided into North and South Assembly segments. Shamanur and his son Mallikarjun had won from both the Assembly constituencies.

Though he was active in politics, he never neglected his business. According to his close aides, Shamanur used to visit his mills and closely monitor food grain prices daily.

Though he had remained loyal to Congress, he was on good terms with chief ministers of other parties. It had been a custom for chief ministers, irrespective of which party they belonged to, to attend his birthday celebrations.

Speaking to *DH*, KPCC spokesperson D Basavaraj said, "Whenever people asked him about his age, he used to say that living beyond 60 was nothing but a bonus." He added that Shamanur used to remark that he had got many bonuses. Shamanur never shied away from hailing Lingayat leaders of other political parties. During an event in Shivamogga a few months ago, he had openly hailed Shivamogga MP B Y Raghavendra and asked people to elect him again for executing development works. This had irked Congress leaders and workers. He served as president of Akhila Bharata Veerashaiva Mahasabha for many years.

Plans afoot to shift Jakkur flying school to Mysuru

Jakkur, From Page 1

The panel reportedly met earlier this month.

Notably, during his visit to the flying school in September, Siddaramaiah had supported the idea of expanding the runway by acquiring about three acres of land to make full use of the more than 200 acres available at Jakkur. He also acknowledged that the court had directed that flying training operations must continue at the aerodrome.

But two months later, the government appears to have changed its stance, even as the DGCA has been pressing state officials to revive the school, which already has state-of-the-art facilities.

It may be noted that the Jakkur aerodrome is situated along the fast-developing corridor leading to the Kempegowda International Airport, which makes the surrounding land among the most valuable in Bengaluru.

Developers have long complained that aviation safety regulations have severely restricted construction of high-rise buildings. Projects within a 2.7-km radius of the aerodrome require No Objection Certificates (NOCs) from the flying school, while height restrictions cap buildings at around 45 metres near the flight path.

While there have been several attempts in the past to shift the flying school, successive governments have exercised caution because the land on which it stands was gifted by the Maharaja of Mysore, Jayachamarajendra Wodeyar, specifically for aviation training. Any deviation from the original purpose of allotment could mean the government may lose legal control over the property too.

In a column published in *DH* in September, Capt GR Gopinath, pioneer of India's first low-cost airline Air Deccan, urged the government not to "pawn the state's heritage family jewels", describing the Jakkur Flying Training School as a unique national asset created on land specifically gifted for aviation training.

DH Classifieds

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I, KAVYALATHA SHREEKUMAR resident of No.156/10E Sugguna Nivas 24th Cross Kempamma Layout, Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru-560076 have changed my name to KAVYALATHA RAO CHAKODBAIL vide affidavit dated 13/12/2025 sworn before notary R.Basavaraja, Bengaluru

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Short circuit: 20 women workers hospitalised after smoke inhalation

YEMAKANAMARADI (BELAGAVI, DHNS): Twenty women workers were taken ill due to asphyxiation caused by thick smoke resulting from the short circuit at a plastic company in the special economic zone under Hattargi gram panchayat in Hukkeri taluk of Belagavi district on Saturday.

Ten workers suffering from breathing issues were admitted to a private hospital in Belagavi. All of them are out of danger, said doctors of the hospital. The smoke started billowing, due to the short circuit, and was first noticed on Saturday afternoon.

Initially, first aid was administered to all the 20 women workers affected by the asphyxiation. Later, 10 among them were rushed to hospital.

Most of the workers working in the plastic company come from Hattargi, Yamakanamaradi and surrounding villages. Fire brigade personnel rushed to the spot and prevented further damage.

New regional party in state: Ibrahim

KALABURAGI, DHNS: Former minister C M Ibrahim said a new regional party will take birth in the state on January 24. He was speaking at a meeting organised by Nava Karnataka Nirmana Andolana, in Kalaburagi on Sunday.

Karnataka Golf Association
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Short Term Tender Notice

Sealed tenders are invited from reputed and experienced contractors for the Construction of a Steel Bridge at the Karnataka Golf Association premises.

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The estimated project cost is Rs: 2.50 crore; Period of completion: 5 months. Working drawings, Bill of Quantity, Site Inspection can be carried out during office working hours **(10:00 am to 5:00 pm) from 18th December 2025**

Tender Documents:

Tender documents can be collected from the KGA Office on payment of a **non-refundable fee of ₹5,000 + GST** (Rupees Five Thousand only). Sealed tenders for the Construction of the Steel Bridge must be submitted **on or before 5:00 PM, Wednesday, 24th December 2025**, at Karnataka Golf Association

The Hon. Secretary
For Further Information, Contact:
Mr. L. Kumar Phinehas /
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ದಿನಾಂಕ : 12–12–2025

ಇ-ಹರಾಜಿನ ಲೈವ್ ಬಿಡ್ಡಿಂಗ್ ಮರು ದಿನಾಂಕ ನಿಗಧಿಪಡಿಸಿದ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ ಧಾರವಾಡ ನಗರಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರದಿಂದ ಇ–ಹರಾಜು ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : ಹು.ಧಾ.ನ.ಪ್ರಾ./ಇ.ಹ.ಪ್ರಾ/2025–26/3924, ದಿನಾಂಕ : 17–11–2025 ರ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಯನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ : 19–11–2025 ರಂದು ಹಾಗೂ 20–11–2025 ರಂದು ವಿವಿಧ ದಿನಪತ್ರಿಕೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನೀಡಿ ಸದರಿ ಇ–ಹರಾಜಿನ ಲೈವ್ ಬಿಡ್ಡಿಂಗ್‌ನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ : 09–12–2025 ರ ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಯಿಂದ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 11–12–2025 ರ ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ ನಿಗಧಿಪಡಿಸಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಆದರೆ ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ. ತಂತ್ರಾಂಶದಲ್ಲಿ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಯಿಂದಾಗಿ ಕೆಲವು ನೋಂದಾಯಿತ ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರಿಗೆ ಬಿಡ್ ಮಾಡಲು ತೊಂದರೆಯಾದ ಕಾರಣ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 12–12–2025 ರಂದು ವಿವಿಧ ದಿನಪತ್ರಿಕೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಲೈವ್ ಬಿಡ್ಡಿಂಗ್ ಮುಂದೂಡಿದ ಕುರಿತು ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಯನ್ನು ನೀಡಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಕಾರಣ ಸದರಿ ಇ–ಹರಾಜಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಈಗಾಗಲೇ ನೊಂದಾಯಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಿಡ್ಡಿಂಗ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗಿಯಾದ ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರು ದಿನಾಂಕ : 16–12–2025 ರ ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ರಿಂದ ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ ಲೈವ್ ಬಿಡ್ಡಿಂಗ್ ಮುಂದುವರೆಸಲು ಸಮಯ ನಿಗಧಿಪಡಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. (5 ನಿಮಿಷ ಡೆಲ್ಟಾ ಟೈಮ್ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ) ಕಾರಣ ಈಗಾಗಲೇ ಲೈವ್ ಬಿಡ್ಡಿಂಗ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಿದ ನೋಂದಾಯಿತ ಬಿಡ್‌ದಾರರು ಮತ್ತೊಮ್ಮೆ ಲೈವ್ ಬಿಡ್ಡಿಂಗ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಲು ಅವಕಾಶ ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಿಕೊಡಲಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ತಿಳಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/– ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು,
ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ – ಧಾರವಾಡ ನಗರಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ, ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ.

ಸಹಿ/– ಆಯುಕ್ತರು,
ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ – ಧಾರವಾಡ ನಗರಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ, ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ.

ಡಿಐಪಿಆರ್/ಧಾರವಾಡ/985/ಮಣಿಪಾಲ್/2025–26

THE HUTTI GOLD MINES COMPANY LIMITED
(A Govt. of Karnataka Undertaking)
Regd. Office: 3rd Floor, KHB Shopping Complex
National Games Village, Koramangala, BENGALURU-560 047
Phone: 2571 0501, Fax: 2570 7380
e-mail: rohgml@gmail.com No. CIN U85110KA1947SGC001321

No.: HGM/RO/E-Auction/2025-26 Date: 15.12.2025

NOTIFICATION
INVITING BIDS FOR FIXED DEPOSITS

The Hutti Gold Mines Company Limited (HGML) intends to invest its Surplus Funds through e-Auction in the deposits with both Public Sector Banks including RRBs as under:

Sl.No	Public Sector Banks including RRBs Non-Callable FD	Period of Investment
1	Rs. 400.00 Crores	One Year

The details of the e-Auction of this tender can be downloaded from the e-Portal of the Government of Karnataka at **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on **15.12.2025**.

The Schedule of events for e-auction are as under

1) Uploading of bid documents in e-portal: **16.12.2025, 12.00 Noon.**
2) Last date to upload the declaration in Annexure-A in the e-portal: **20.12.2025 on or before 1.00 PM. 3)** Live bidding for interest rates: **23.12.2025 between 11.00 AM to 2.30 PM.**

Sd/-
Managing Director

DIPR/CP/4406/SA/2025-26

THE LEADING GOLD PRODUCER IN INDIA

MSIL Mysore Sales International Limited
(Mysuru Branch Office)
Mysuru Trade Center, 3rd Floor, Opp.To KSRTC Bus Stand,
Above Bhima Jewellers, Mysuru-570 001
Phone: 0821-2344100

No. MSIL/003/2025-26 Dated:15.12.2025

SHORT-TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(THROUGH KPP PORTAL)

Short-Term tenders are invited from eligible individuals / firms / agencies for **Transporting Liquor stocks from KSBCL Badanaguppe Depot in Chamarajanagara District to respective liquor outlets of MSIL coming under Mysuru Branch.** Last date and time for submission of bids: **30.12.2025 up to 3.00 pm.** For more details visit: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Branch Head (Mysuru Branch)

FORM B
PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT
(Regulation 12 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2016)
FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE STAKEHOLDERS OF SHAPOS FARMS PRIVATE LIMITED

Sl No.	Particulars	Details
1.	Name of Corporate Debtor	**SHAPOS FARMS PRIVATE LIMITED**
2.	Date of Incorporation of Corporate Debtor	21st March 2022
3.	Authority under which Corporate Debtor is Incorporated / Registered	ROC- Karnataka, Incorporated under the Companies Act, 2013
4.	Corporate Identity Number (CIN) of Corporate Debtor	U51909KA2022PTC159010
5.	Address of the Registered Office and Principal Office (if any) of Corporate Debtor	Registered address: #1207/343, 9th Main, 7th Sector, HSR Layout, Bengaluru - 560102
6.	Date of closure of insolvency resolution process	30th October 2025
7.	Liquidation commencement date of the corporate debtor	30th October 2025 (order uploaded on 12th December 2025)
8.	Name and registration number of the insolvency professional acting as Liquidator	Beleyur Resolutions Private Limited represented by Ravindra Beleyur Reg No.: IBBI/IPE-0163/IPA-1/2023-24/50073
9.	Address and e-mail of the liquidator, as registered with the Board	'Shreevathsa', 428, 19th B Cross, 3rd Block, Jayanagar Bengaluru - 560 011 Tel: +91 80 26540193 Email: ip@beleyur.com
10.	Address and e-mail to be used for correspondence with the liquidator	'Shreevathsa', 428/ 19th B Cross, 3d Block, Jayanagar, Bengaluru - 560 011 Tele: +91 80 26540193 Email: cirp.shapos.farms@beleyur.com
11.	Last date for submission of claims	14th January 2026

Notice is hereby given that the Hon'ble National Company Law Tribunal, Bengaluru Bench has ordered the commencement of the liquidation of Shapos Farms Private Limited on 30th October 2025. (Order uploaded on 12th December 2025)

The stakeholders of Shapos Farms Private Limited are hereby called upon to submit their claims with proof, on or before **14th January 2026,** to the liquidator at the address mentioned against item 10.

The financial creditors shall submit their claims with proof by electronic means only. All other creditors may submit the claims with the proof in person, by post or by electronic means.

Submission of false or misleading proofs of claim shall attract penalties.

In case a stakeholder does not submit its claims during the liquidation process, the claims submitted by such a stakeholder during the corporate insolvency resolution process under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Persons) Regulations, 2016, shall be deemed to be submitted under Section 38.

Sd/-
Ravindra Beleyur
representing Beleyur Resolution Private Limited (IPE)
Liquidator

Date: 13th December 2025
Place: Mysore

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Only through KPP portal)

BWSSB invites Short Term Itemwar Tenders in Two Stage Tender System from registered agencies for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (West), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore-09.

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number		Amount put to tender EMD (in Rs.)	Last date & time for Submission of Tender	Date & time for Opening of Tender
1	West-1	BWSSB/EEW-1/TO/PB/4936/2025-26 Date: 12.12.2025 (Reserved for SC Category)	1	Rs.30,25,422/- Rs.30,300/-	26-12-2025 upto 4:00 pm	29-12-2025 after 11:30 am
2		BWSSB/EEW-1/TO/PB/4936/2025-26 Date: 12.12.2025 (Reserved for Cat-II(A))	2	Rs.35,19,832/- Rs.35,200/-		
3			3	Rs.26,47,610/- Rs.26,500/-		
4		BWSSB/EEW-1/TO/PB/4936/2025-26 Date: 12.12.2025 (Reserved for SC Category)	4	Rs.15,12,017/- Rs.25,000/-		
5		BWSSB/EEW-1/TO/PB/4936/2025-26 Date: 12.12.2025	5	Rs.26,96,442/- Rs.53,950/-		
6			6	Rs.14,54,299/- Rs.36,400/-		
7			7	Rs.26,34,229/- Rs.52,700/-		
8			8	Rs.25,97,678/- Rs.52,000/-		
9		BWSSB/EEW-1/TO/PB/4936/2025-26 Date: 12.12.2025 (Reserved for Cat-II(A))	9	Rs.24,87,298/- Rs.25,000/-		
10		BWSSB/EEW-1/TO/PB/4936/2025-26 Date: 12.12.2025	10	Rs.24,43,841/- Rs.50,000/-		
11			11	Rs.32,99,754/- Rs.66,000/-		
12		BWSSB/EEW-1/TO/PB/4936/2025-26 Date: 12.12.2025 (Reserved for SC Category)	12	Rs.16,29,712/- Rs.20,400/-		
13		BWSSB/EEW-1/TO/PB/4936/2025-26 Date: 12.12.2025	13	Rs.35,67,631/- Rs.71,400/-		
14		BWSSB/EEW-1/TO/PB/4936/2025-26 Date: 12.12.2025 (Reserved for ST Category)	14	Rs.50,20,333/- Rs.50,300/-		
15		BWSSB/EEW-1/TO/PB/4936/2025-26 Date: 12.12.2025	15	Rs.29,48,122/- Rs.59,000/-		
16			16	Rs.37,99,131/- Rs. 76,000/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (West-1)

Office of the Chief Engineer (North), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore-09.

17	North-East	BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3418/2025-26 Date: 12.12.2025	17	Rs.38,97,307/- Rs.78,000/-	23-12-2025 upto 4:00 pm	24-12-2025 after 3:00 pm
18		BWSSB/EE(NE)/TO/PB/3416/2025-26 Date: 12.12.2025	18	Rs.63,38,027/- Rs.1,26,800/-	30-12-2025 upto 3:00 pm	31-12-2025 after 4:00 pm

Sd/- Executive Engineer (North-East)

Office of the Chief Engineer (East), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore-09.

19	East-1	BWSSB/EE(E-1)/PB/3789/2025-26 Date: 10.12.2025	19	Rs.5,27,848/- Rs.13,200/-	29-12-2025 upto 4:00 pm	31-12-2025 after 5:00 pm

Sd/- Executive Engineer (East-1)

20	WWM-P-C.valley	BWSSB/EE(WWM-P-CV)/PB/1337/2025-26 Date: 09.12.2025	20	Rs.72,55,348/- Rs.1,45,110/-	02-01-2026 upto 4:00 pm	03-01-2026 after 4:30 pm

Sd/- Executive Engineer (WWM-P-C.Valley)

The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-Procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the undersigned office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/YC/4423/2024-25

ಭಾವಪೂರ್ಣ ಶ್ರದ್ಧಾಂಜಲಿ

ಮಹಾಸಭೆಯ ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರಾದ

ಡಾ. ಶಾಮನೂರು ಶಿವಶಂಕರಪ್ಪನವರು

ದಿನಾಂಕ 14.12.2025 ರ ಭಾನುವಾರ ಸಂಜೆ ಲಿಂಗೈಕ್ಯರಾಗಿದ್ದಾರೆಂದು ತಿಳಿಸಲು ವಿಷಾಧಿಸುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಮೃತರ ಆತ್ಮಕ್ಕೆ ಚಿರಶಾಂತಿ ದೊರೆಯಲೆಂದು ಹಾಗೂ ಅವರ ಅಗಲುವಿಕೆಯಿಂದ ಸಮಾಜ ಮತ್ತು ಅವರ ಕುಟುಂಬಕ್ಕಾಗಿರುವ ಅಗಾಧ ದುಃಖವನ್ನು ಭರಿಸುವ ಶಕ್ತಿ ನೀಡಲೆಂದು ರೇಣುಕಾದಿ ಆಚಾರ್ಯರಲ್ಲಿ ಮತ್ತು ಬಸವಾದಿ ಪ್ರಮಥರಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಾರ್ಥಿಸುತ್ತೇವೆ. ದಿನಾಂಕ : 15.12.2025, ಮಧ್ಯಾಹ್ನ 12.00 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ ದಾವಣಗೆರೆಯ ಸ್ವಗೃಹದಲ್ಲಿ ಮತ್ತು ಮಧ್ಯಾಹ್ನ 3.30 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ ದಾವಣಗೆರೆಯ ಹೈಸ್ಕೂಲ್ ಮೈದಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂತಿಮ ದರ್ಶನದ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿದೆ ಮತ್ತು ಸಂಜೆ 5.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ದಾವಣಗೆರೆಯ ಕಲ್ಲೇಶ್ವರ ಮಿಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂತಿಮ ವಿಧಿ ವಿಧಾನಗಳು ನೆರವೇರಲಿದೆ.

ದುಃಖದಿಂದ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವವರು

ಶ್ರೀ ಈಶ್ವರ ಖಂಡ್ರೆ, ಮಾನ್ಯ ಸಚಿವರು
ಹಿರಿಯ ಉಪಾಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು ಮತ್ತು
ಮಹಾಪ್ರಧಾನ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿಗಳು

ಶ್ರೀ ಶಂಕರ ಬಿದರಿ
ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು,
ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಘಟಕ

ಹಾಗೂ ಪದಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಕಾರ್ಯಕಾರಿ ಸಮಿತಿ ಸದಸ್ಯರು

ಡಾ. ಶಾಮನೂರು ಶಿವಶಂಕರಪ್ಪ
ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು ಮತ್ತು ಶಾಸಕರು

ಅಖಿಲ ಭಾರತ ವೀರಶೈವ ಲಿಂಗಾಯತ ಮಹಾಸಭಾ (ರಿ.)

DECCAN HERALD
ESTABLISHED 1948

Move on FDI good for insurance sector

The Union cabinet's decision to approve legislation to raise the foreign direct investment (FDI) cap in the insurance sector will help increase the depth and spread of insurance in the country. It will take the financial and economic reform agenda forward and boost the investment sentiment. The legislation is expected to be introduced in the ongoing winter session of parliament. The government thinks the measure will "deepen penetration, accelerate growth and promote ease of doing business in the insurance sector." Insurance was a state monopoly but the UPA government opened it up for private and foreign investment. The NDA government gradually increased the investment cap, and though the BJP as an Opposition party had once opposed it, it has now taken it to 100%.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced the decision to raise the FDI from 74% to 100% in the sector during the presentation of the budget for the current year. She had said that the enhanced limit would be enforced with conditionalities to protect the country's interests. Insurance is a capital-intensive sector and needs investment for a long time before it starts yielding returns. It calls for deployment of funds, technology and expertise to improve the penetration of the sector. India is among the most underinsured countries in the world, with a penetration of just about 3.7% against the global average of 7%. Though the penetration has seen improvement in the last two decades, the growth has been much lower than what was expected when the liberalisation of the sector was initiated. The coverage and penetration increased during the Covid period but saw a decline after that.

The govt is out to further unshackle the sector, but it should keep its eyes wide open

Awareness in the country about insurance is limited, and various constraints limit the sector's reach. With the FDI decision, the government expects the industry to grow at an annual rate of over 7% over the next five years. New technologies and global practices in distribution and management are expected to energise the sector. Indian companies will also have to change to cope with the new situation, and competition is expected to help them and the sector. The government plans to put in place safeguards and guard rails to protect the country's interests. Many countries, including China and Brazil, have allowed 100% FDI in the insurance sector. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) should exercise regulatory oversight to ensure that the interests of the policy-holders are fully protected.

Quacks are getting a free run. Stop them

The shocking case of a Bengaluru software engineer losing Rs 48 lakh to a self-styled Ayurvedic healer is not an exception; it is a symptom of a rapidly growing public-health menace. What began as a visit to a roadside tent promising discreet cures for sexual health problems spiralled into a months-long fraud involving exorbitantly priced 'rare' herbs and coercive tactics, and eventually leading to kidney damage caused by unknown substances. The police have now arrested the self-styled healer, but the lesson is far larger: India today is staring at a full-blown epidemic of modern quackery. The Internet has become a new breeding ground for this racket. On social media platforms, healers with no formal credentials peddle miracle cures for sexual dysfunction, diabetes, obesity, infertility, hair loss, and even cancer. Virtually anyone with a ring light and a smartphone can now position himself as a 'doctor', '*guruji*', or '*vaidya*', selling everything from herbal capsules to powders, and promising instant results. The self-proclaimed healers exploit stigma, anxiety and desperation, especially among patients reluctant to discuss intimate health problems with qualified practitioners.

The law to curb them is riddled with loopholes. A major one is the misuse of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) licences. Since obtaining a nutraceutical or food supplement licence is significantly easier than securing approval for a drug from the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation, many quacks label their concoctions 'food products' while aggressively promoting them online as medicines. Some add undeclared synthetic drugs—such as high-dose steroids or sexual-enhancement chemicals—to create quick, noticeable effects. These so-called supplements bypass clinical trials, toxicity studies and efficacy checks. Even genuine vitamins can cause harm when consumed indiscriminately, and unknown adulterants can have catastrophic effects.

The case of the techie who lost both money and health to a self-proclaimed healer should serve as an eye-opener

Why do people fall for quacks? The answer lies in a mix of shame, desperation, lack of awareness, and the seductive promise of instant results. Social media algorithms amplify these pitches, serving tailor-made 'solutions' to vulnerable audiences. And while quackery is an offence under multiple laws—including the Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act—enforcement is lethargic. Both the Union and state health departments remain in prolonged slumber. At a time when quacks openly advertise and run camps in the major metros, the authorities ought to be proactively combing the Internet, cracking down on illegal products, and prosecuting offenders without hesitation. Alternative medicine does not mean giving free rein to predatory charlatans masquerading as healers. The country cannot afford to wait for more victims to be ruined physically and financially. The government must act decisively and immediately to stamp out frauds who profit from pain.

THE GAZA TRAP

Why Pakistan risks walking into a geopolitical minefield

A possible Pakistani peacekeeping role in Gaza exposes a minefield of diplomatic risks, sectarian tensions, and domestic vulnerabilities

LT GEN BHOPINDER SINGH (RETD)

A puzzled onlooker is once said to have asked a Pakistani mob protesting about Palestine, "*Bhai, yeh bataain.....Falasteen ka rasta kidhar hai*?" Then suddenly a nonplussed protestor shot back enthusiastically, "*Rasta humein bhi nahin pata, bas dil se wahan kharay hain!*" This engagement personifies the popular sentiment in the only country in the world to have been created in the name of a religion i.e., Pakistan, or literally, 'The land of the pure'.

Pakistan's natural affinity with the Palestinian cause is predicated on Muslim unity (*Ummah*) and identity (with Al-Quds mosque in Jerusalem assuming spiritual significance) and, therefore, Palestine's suffering assumes a religious context of *jihad* (struggle), *Sabr* (patience) and *Zulm ka Muqabala* (resistance against oppression). While it has been the rallying cry for the political leaders and even poets — the latest interest in Palestine could be for purposes that are conveniently distractive, geopolitical, or even desperately commercial.

The pummelling of the narrow Gaza strip that was triggered by the Hamas-led terror attack in 2023, has since led to a disproportionate and unsparing retaliation, accounting for a little over 67,000 Palestinian deaths and the devastating flattening of Gaza. But the fighting and violent counter-targeting hasn't subsided, still. Both sides sense the sheer inability to either accept unconditional defeat or continue fighting, given the unacceptable human and financial costs. Both need a face-saving truce and pull-back to old lines — but that would need a mutually acceptable security provider to fill the gap.

The complication is, Hamas is not completely obliterated as the Israelis would have the rest of the world believe, and the Israelis will never accept the return of Hamas-led security apparatus. Then, there is the issue of instinctively non-acceptable options and certain other countries that just don't have the militaristic, political, or moral heft to step in. Leading the simply unacceptable countries are Iran and Türkiye. Effectively incapable are the Arab nations like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, etc., who are meekly toying with the idea of a joint-Arab force, but haven't shown the individual courage.

This situational morass puts the spotlight on Pakistan — militarily the most powerful Islamic country (the only nuclear-powered in the Ummah). It is also the most experienced Islamic nation to have conducted overseas deployments i.e., 46 different United Nations missions, bilateral deployments, and training missions in countries like Saudi Arabia, Jordan, the UAE, etc., all-in-all with over 250,000 Pakistanis deployed abroad under the 'Blue Helmet'

missions or in their own uniforms, since independence. History suggests a reasonably professional, disciplined, and effective conduct, in conflict zones like Congo, Rwanda, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Sudan, etc., or even in the West Asian theatre of serving in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Kuwait, Yemen, etc. They are also battle-hardened with urban conflict (given their situational concerns in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa or Balochistan) or in providing humanitarian and relief, and rehabilitation support.

But intervention in the Gaza Strip is a completely different kettle of fish, given the layered complexities, despite the plausible opportunity to serve the ostensible 'Palestinian cause'. A possible nudge from the United States, Saudi Arabia, and even Israel notwithstanding, the Pakistanis potentially walk into many traps. First, such a move is tantamount to recognising Israel as a sovereign nation, something the Pakistanis have steadfastly avoided, despite many Arab sheikhdoms having accepted the same. But diplomacy aside, it potentially puts the effectively defenceless Pakistani security forces (even if they were to be armed—as opening fire is not an option) at risk from fire from both sides, targeted or unintended. There would always be pressures from the Israeli side to 'control' effectively, and be held accountable to any fire into Israeli territory, as if it were the Pakistanis who were responsible. Portents of an inadvertent Israeli-Pakistani firefight are unimaginable beyond words.

On the flip side, such an intervention by Pakistanis could also be seen as a matter of noble duty towards Palestine and flexing of its sovereign capability—a rare legitimacy that the Pakistani 'establishment' (read, military) and Field Marshal Asim Munir in particular, desperately seek domestically, as also currying favour with Donald Trump. Financial gratification from such an intervention (both directly from Israel, or in the form of US 'aid') would be life-sustaining to a Pakistani economy reeling under an estimated $23 billion in external debt servicing needs in 2025-2026. Even the Arab sheikhdoms that are known to 'outsource' security needs to countries like Pakistan would be spared the blushes and could chip in to the Pakistani coffers for providing security services to stabilise the region. With Saudi Arabia backing Pakistan, both the *mullah* (cleric) and the *moolah* (much-needed money for the depleted coffers) get served.

But 'mercenary service' (even under the guise of a peacekeeping force) in the Gaza Strip can come with some incalculably grave consequences. It runs the risk of lumping Pakistan with countries like Jordan and Saudi Arabia, which are believed to collide with Israel, as also triggering sectarian tensions with a brooding Iran (known to be supporting Hamas) watching disconcertingly. It was similar concerns that deterred Pakistan from sending its security troops to Yemen in April 2015, as it wanted to avoid taking sides in the geopolitical muddle, risk triggering sectarian undercurrents, and avoid being seen taking sides in the war within Ummah. Today, governmental stand aside, many in the Ummah perceive Hamas as the last force standing up to Israel, and the spectre of Pakistanis potentially getting paid by Israel/US (to control or worse, 'disarm' Hamas) would hardly ingratiate them in the angry eyes of the Islamic world. Pakistan has a difficult choice between the devil and the empty coffers.

(The writer is a former Lt Governor of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Puducherry)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

A city's memory in motion

Chickpet is less a market and more a living archive of culture

SHAROON SUNNY

Walking through Chickpet on any given day feels a little like stepping through a fold in time. The narrow lanes carry a mercantile history that has thrived for over 250 years.

As the year draws to a close and Christmas inches closer, the market folds the season into its steady, centuries-old rhythm, letting the old and the new brush past each other without ceremony. The densely packed lanes slip easily into their older identities. One bend leads you into a world ruled entirely by scent: long, smoky black *elaichi*; knobbly dry ginger; mountains of dates and raisins; and cashews in every grade imaginable. If you're preparing a Christmas plum cake, this is the lane that will save you.

Here, a woman bargaining for figs stands beside a chef buying in bulk, while a newly married couple debates which cashew size counts as "premium".

In the midst of this choreographed chaos, a delivery boy slides through with a handcart, his movements elastic, almost boneless. As you meander deeper, you meet traders whose family histories branch out across the country. A Marwari shopkeeper breaks into fluent Kannada so effortlessly that you'd mistake him for a local—until he lands on one gently rounded consonant that reveals his roots.

Last week, I found myself crammed into one of Chickpet's overflowing passageways, waiting to pick up a set of Christmas tree balls from Sapthagiri Stores. The lane was barely wide enough for one person, yet as in every Indian market, five people insisted on fitting through at once. While I waited, three elderly women squeezed in. Peering past me and then over two more heads, they called out in unison, "Appa *illva*? My family has been buying from him for 35 years!" The young woman behind the counter laughed. "Ayyo! He's upstairs only, aunty. You can go to the fifth floor." "Fifth floor-auntee?" one exclaimed. "When we first came here, there was only one floor!" "And one bulb!" another added, setting off a round of laughter.

Next door, Ali Brothers had lined their entrance with stars shaped like chrysanthemums, strings of silver beads, and balls the size of coconuts. Here, it feels perfectly natural that Muslim shopkeepers sell Christmas ornaments, Hindu traders stock Eid fineries, and Jain families set out lanterns for Deepavali. Chickpet isn't performing diversity; it simply lives it.

Chickpet is less a marketplace and more a living archive of the city's cultural negotiations. No celebration belongs to one community; instead, they move from shop to shop, lane to lane, hand to hand, like light passing through different windows. In a city that often speaks of old and new Bengaluru as though they are estranged cousins, Chickpet reminds us that coexistence is a daily practice, held together by decades of "Where is your father? We've been coming here for 35 years."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Centralisation threatens education reform

The Cabinet's approval of the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhikshan Bill is being propagated as reform, but it exposes a dangerous obsession with centralisation. Replacing UGC, AICTE, and NCTE with one regulator ignores India's real crisis—chronic underfunding, faculty shortages, rural exclusion, and shrinking academic freedom. Separating funding from regulation while keeping it under ministerial control invites political interference and weakens university autonomy. Uniform standards will hurt small and rural institutions, pushing them towards closure or privatisation. True reform demands trust in universities, not another top-down, one-size-fits-all experiment that rewards control over quality, diversity, and equity. Students and teachers deserve investment, freedom, and accountability, not renaming of regulation.
Vijaykumar H K, Raichur

Ineffective gag orders

Apropos 'Shivakumar will become CM on Jan 6 or 9, says Congress MLA' (Dec 14), staunch DKS supporter and Congress MLA Iqbal Hussain has rekindled the CM debate, reiterating that DKS is on the verge of taking over as CM in place of Siddaramaiah on January 6 or 9. Despite a restraining order from the party General Secretary in charge of Karnataka, Randip Surjewala, camp followers on either side, including Siddaramaiah's son and Congress MLC Yathindra, have expressed their views on the CM tussle in public. Even threats of action have not yielded results, and although the leaders concerned, Siddaramaiah and DKS, have disapproved of these utterances, it is evident that both are keeping the pot boiling in their own selfish interests.
C V Aravind, Bengaluru

Ambition vs opportunism

'Refusing Savarkar award exposes Tharoor's dilemma' (Dec 13) is a good analysis of Shashi Tharoor's personality, a Congress leader who stands head and shoulders above most politicians. After his illustrious career as a diplomat serving in the United Nations, it was Sonia Gandhi who was instrumental in gifting him his second career as a party MP. However, Tharoor's actions suggest he is flirting with the BJP. His reported agreement to accept the Veer Savarkar International Award from a Right-wing NGO, followed by a public refusal, raises questions about his consistency. Tharoor should not venture to sail on two separate boats with a leg on each; his political ambition banking on opportunism does not behove his international stature.
M Basavaraj, Davangere

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

Rahul Gandhi is lying to the country, nothing can be more unfortunate than this. In Bihar, SIR happened, and there was no rigging...
Sanjay Jaiswal, BJP MP

A lie that defends my interests is the absolute truth, but truth that goes against my survival is a pure lie.
Bangambiki Habyarimana

TO BE PRECISE

"We've been scammed!" : Angry Messi fans in Kolkata.

IN PERSPECTIVE

The need for a law that lets you log off

While several countries have enacted or recognised the right to disconnect, it has not yet become a statutory right in India

SUNITHA ABHAY JAIN

Discussions around the right to disconnect have catapulted to centre stage with the introduction of the Right to Disconnect Bill, 2025, tabled in Parliament by MP Supriya Sule. The private member's bill seeks to establish clear, enforceable boundaries between professional demands and personal time. Its objective is to foster a better quality of life, promote work-life balance and reduce burnout caused by constant digital connectivity.

The right to disconnect allows employees to disengage from work during non-working hours. Employees can choose to ignore work-related communication outside official schedules or on holidays. The bill mandates the establishment of an Employee Welfare Authority, tasked with conducting baseline studies, monitoring compliance and negotiating terms and conditions for after-hours work engagements. Every individual entity that violates this right may face penalties amounting to 1% of their total employee remuneration. One of the important aspects of the bill is that it fosters employee wellness and provides for counselling services and the establishment of digital detox centres.

The right to disconnect is not yet a statutory right in India. Article 21 of the Constitution guarantees the right to life and personal liberty. The right to life also encompasses the right to health and dignity. However, the new labour codes, including the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, do not explicitly provide for a right to disconnect. While these codes address issues related to working hours and overtime, they remain silent on after-hours work. Some Indian companies, such as Motilal Oswal Financial Services, have taken proactive steps by informally incorporating policies that discourage emails after 7 pm.

Several countries have enacted or recognised the right to disconnect. It first emerged as a legal right in France in 2016 and quickly spread to other European nations. The El Khomri Law, a national legislation in France, formally introduced this right. Spain recognises this right across both public and private sectors. In Italy, the right to disconnect was acknowledged through legislation on "smart working", which is defined as work with no precise constraints on hours or place of work. In Belgium, the right to disconnect was implemented in 2023 through the Labour Deal (Act of 3 October 2022 on various labour provisions), requiring private-sector companies with 20 or more employees to formalise rules. In Asia, the Philippines has also proposed legislation granting employees the right to ignore after-hours calls and messages.

In a globalised world, with remote work gaining traction, many employees are compelled to remain on long calls after work hours. This adversely affects mental health, disrupts family life, triggers anxiety and stress and deteriorates overall well-being. In extreme cases, increasing work pressure has even driven people to suicide. Advocates of the right to disconnect argue that it protects mental health, enhances efficiency and productivity, and fosters gender equality. It plays an important role in preventing digital fatigue. Researchers in organisational psychology stress the need for clear psychological and temporal boundaries between work and non-work. Yet the always-on culture enabled by digital connectivity collapses these boundaries, leading to role conflict, stress spillover and an inability to psychologically detach.

Studies published in journals such as Information Systems Research and Computers in Human Behaviour show that constant digital connectivity leads to technostress, digital fatigue, emotional exhaustion and sleep disruption. Critics of the right to disconnect argue that it reduces business flexibility, poses enforcement difficulties and may have negative economic impacts, among other concerns. Nevertheless, the right to disconnect is seen as part of 21st-century labour rights. It aligns with the International Labour Organisation's Decent Work Agenda, which promotes rest, humane working hours and worker dignity. Sonnentag and Fritz (2015) observe that psychological detachment from work is essential for well-being, and legal protection helps institutionalise this detachment. Allen et al. (2021) similarly state that constant availability undermines work-life balance and increases burnout.

The right to disconnect is seen not merely as a labour right but as a mental health imperative. For India, enacting such a law is essential to recognise and operationalise this right in crafting a humane future of work. Ultimately, the right to disconnect is not about curbing efficiency, but about redefining sustainable work. It stands as a modern safeguard against an ancient truth: 'Humans are not machines'.

(The writer is a professor, School of Law, Christ University)

America's NSS: Domestic populism as the new grand strategy

BRIGADIER ANIL RAMAN (RETD)

The 2025 American National Security Strategy (NSS) is not merely another iteration in a stable series; it represents a structural rupture. For the first time since 1945, Washington has boldly subordinated its external posture to the drivers of its internal ideological battles. What was once presented as universalist leadership has morphed into a defence of a particular civilisational identity. The document is less a strategy for the world than a projection of America's ongoing culture war onto the global screen.

Under the Goldwater-Nichols statute, the NSS is a product of inter-agency deliberation and reflects a whole-of-government view. In practice, the 2025 version bears the clear signs of competing factions—economic nationalists, security hardliners, and transactional pragmatists—each seeking to influence the text. The final product, carrying the President's signature, is therefore as much a political artefact as a strategic one. It tells us more about the thinking of particular American constituencies than about the actual distribution of power in the Indo-Pacific or West Asia.

The language of borders, industrial revival, demographic anxiety, and hostility to "globalist bureaucracies" is unmistakable. Migration and multilateral institutions are no longer policy variables; they are framed as civilisational threats. This is not the balance-of-power realism that many in India once hoped a Republican administration might return to. It is populist nativism elevated to the level of grand strategy.

The sharpest departure lies in the way alliances are treated. The older American model rested on a mix of shared values and credible burden-sharing, with the assumption that specific commitments were near-permanent. The 2025 NSS replaces that with brazen transactionalism: partners must continually demonstrate "value". Europe is criticised not just for free-riding but for its internal social liberalism and demographic evolution. In effect, cultural-political conformity is becoming a new criterion for strategic trust. This is a long distance from the inclusive, rules-based coalitions that India has cautiously invested in over the past two decades.

The document repeatedly links grand strategy to identity, demographics, and domestic political orientation in partner nations. One is reminded of older European discourses that New Delhi has historically treated with scepticism. When loyalty is judged less by treaty obligations than by perceived cultural proximity, the post-1945 liberal internationalist bargain stands redundant.

The most consequential pivot is the renewed emphasis on the Western Hemisphere at the expense of global policing. The language echoes the Monroe Doctrine more than it does the post-Cold War ambition for primacy. For the rest of the world, the "Trump Corollary" to the doctrine implies a weaker American presence and a greater expectation of self-help or regional balancing. Washington will remain engaged, but increasingly as an offshore broker rather than an onshore guarantor.

The most serious long-term consequence is the collapse of predictability. When grand strategy is so openly linked to domestic political cycles, partners cannot structure long-term defence plans around American assurances. Deterrence, arms control, and crisis stability will all suffer when policy can turn on its head every four or eight years.

What this means for the rest of the world

For countries that have relied on stability through American security policies, the implications are clear:

- Assume volatility as the new normal.
- Accelerate autonomous defence capabilities and resilient supply chains.
- Diversify strategic partnerships with Europe, Japan, the Gulf states, and ASEAN as centres, because over-reliance on any single power is now hazardous.
- Negotiate explicit, legally robust agreements rather than accept rhetorical solidarity.
- Track American domestic politics with the same rigour once reserved for Russia and China.

India's response

For New Delhi, the 2025 NSS is a moment of clarity. The era of assuming quasi-alliance-like American support is over. Cooperation will henceforth be explicitly transactional, contingent on commercial concessions, technology offsets, or political alignment on issues Washington cares about at a given moment. The threat to India from an emboldened China freed from American overwatch is likely to escalate, and Washington may not care over-much. Crises may become bargaining opportunities for adversaries who sense American hesitation, as taught by the Sindoor experience.

This does not imply disengagement. It demands a more complex, more institutionalised framework: binding co-production contracts, technology-transfer schedules insulated from political change, pre-negotiated logistics and intelligence-sharing protocols. Soft power and shared values were always secondary; they are now clearly marginal.

Three broad imperatives are evident:

- Accelerated self-reliant deterrence and modernisation to reduce structural vulnerabilities.
- Deeper, parallel partnerships with Europe, Japan, and select Middle Eastern states to hedge against American volatility.
- A shift from declaratory diplomacy to detailed, practical, and enforceable mechanisms that will last changes of administration.

The 2025 NSS marks the end of the post-war illusion that American power could be separated from America's domestic ideological contests. What emerges is a more "normal" great power, pursuing advantage, leverage, and selective engagement rather than order-building.

For India and other middle powers, the message is unambiguous: the margin of safety now lies in our own capabilities and in the quality of our diversified partnerships. The old habit of looking over the horizon for American rescue is no longer strategically tenable. In the emerging world, resilience is not a choice; it is the only insurance policy available.

(The writer is a research fellow at the Takshashila Institution)

Investment in manufacturing, infrastructure and property is expected to fall this year, a remarkable turn for an economy whose growth reshaped the world

DAISUKE WAKABAYASHI AND AMY CHANG CHIEN

Many Chinese textile manufacturers are investing abroad, in countries like Vietnam and Egypt. NYT

Historic shift in China as investment slump deepens

For the past three decades, as China's economy has developed into a global powerhouse, investment has grown reliably each year. That is about to change. This year, China's investments in assets like new factories, public infrastructure and housing are expected to fall for the first time since the late 1980s, ushering in a more conservative era for an economy that has reshaped the global order with years of robust growth.

The shift also signals that investing in China is no longer a surefire bet, even as Beijing continues to project confidence with economic growth estimates of 5%. But, as is often the case with the country's economic data, the investment slump has raised more questions than answers.

A real estate crisis in China has dragged on for five years with no end in sight, sapping the strength from one of the economy's pillars. Local governments, strapped for cash because of the property downturn, are not pouring money into infrastructure projects as they did during previous periods of economic malaise. Beijing's crackdown on excessive competition among Chinese manufacturers has chilled the climate for capital investment to fuel expansion.

From January to October, a broad measure called fixed-asset investment has fallen 1.7% from the same period last year. The slide began in the second half of this year and accelerated with a sharp, double-digit decline in October. Analysts believe that investment dipped again in November, with that data scheduled to be released today.

Investment in property, infrastructure and manufacturing — the three major components that make up the figure — are all declining at the same time. In the past, a downturn in one area was offset by spending in another segment. It is rare for all three pillars of investment to fall at once. The government typically has stepped in to manage downturns by bolstering real estate or spending lavishly on infrastructure. China has been reluctant to act boldly this year to help.

"This is a historically significant change," said Dan Wang, a director on Eurasia Group's China team. "This is a different style of managing the economy in the short term."

Wang said that this more passive approach suggests Chinese leaders are confident in the continued strength of exports, which have fuelled a record trade surplus despite rising protectionism and growing global concern about the flood of inexpensive Chinese goods.

Instead of pumping money into the economy by building more airports and high-speed railroad stations, highways and bridges, local governments are holding back. And for the property sector, there has been no industrywide bailout or comprehensive plan to spur real estate investment.

The investment drought is playing out urgently in the boardrooms of China Vanke, one of the country's largest property developers, which is now teetering on the edge of possible financial collapse.

Vanke, unable to pay its debts, has leaned on its top shareholder, the State-owned firm Shenzhen Metro, to cover its debt obligations. But last month it asked bondholders to delay repayment of a bond for the first time, signalling that State financial support may have reached its limit. A deadline on some of its debt looms on Monday, and Vanke may need creditors to accept a delay in getting paid.

Chinese officials have started to show some alarm at the plunge in investment, which was listed as a policy priority for 2026 in a plan announced on December 11 by Xi Jinping, China's top leader.

The deep problems in the property sector — too many apartments and long-running drops in their value — have shaken business confidence.

Chien Ting-tsai, who has run a manufacturing and real estate development company in Zhuhai, a city in southern China, for more than three decades, said customers are not expanding their businesses now because the economy is weak. He said the pipeline of design contracts has thinned dramatically.

"Some manufacturers have shut down factories and frozen all investment in new facilities," said Chien, 69, who is from Taiwan and has worked in China since the 1990s. "Everyone is frantically selling off fixed assets because they're uncertain about the future."

Pam Jiang, a sales assistant at Fashiontex International Limited, a textile company with roughly 150 employees in Jiangsu province, one of China's main fabric manufacturing hubs, said the domestic textile industry is pulling back on investments in facilities.

"The textile industry in China is basically stagnant and downsizing," she said.

She attributed the drop in investment to rising labour costs and uncertainty about tariffs. Instead of expanding domestically, Jiang said, many Chinese textile manufacturers are investing abroad in countries such as Vietnam and Egypt.

The slowdown in manufacturing investment has coincided with the government's campaign against involution, a term for the ruthless competition in which Chinese companies wage profit-eroding price wars to gain market share and outlast rivals. Provincial or city governments have often fuelled such races to the bottom by providing incentives and support to foster local champions. This produced an oversupply of well-funded companies, each ready to add more products than customers want to buy.

But some economists say China's efforts to slow that process down have given local governments permission to hold back on throwing money at manufacturing.

Jeremy Smith, a research analyst at Rhodium Group's China practice, said he believes local governments might be taking China's cue. He noted that fixed-asset investment has declined in nearly all of China's provinces and prefectural-level cities since May.

The downturn in investment numbers, he said, more accurately reflects what Rhodium had suspected following the collapse of the property sector.

Rhodium has reported that China's investment activity likely fell in 2023 and 2024, based on other economic signals, such as credit growth. Due mainly to slower investment, Rhodium estimated that China's economic growth was between 2.4% and 2.8% last year, well short of the government's official figure of 5%.

"Declining investment is more the norm than the exception," Smith said.

On the one hand, he said, China seeks to project an image of economic resilience. At the same time, it aims to demonstrate that it is curbing the harmful competition plaguing many of its industries.

A slump does not bode well for China's economic growth, as investment accounts for a significant share of gross domestic product. Yet the broader measure of investment China uses to calculate GDP rose in the third quarter despite the sharp decline in fixed-asset investment, leaving economists scrambling for how to explain the discrepancy.

In a November report, Goldman Sachs said it does not expect fixed-asset investment to weigh on economic growth because the decline is "overstated." The investment bank said that most of the downturn is "a statistical correction of previously over-reported data" rather than a genuine slowdown.

The New York Times

Who is failing Karnataka's public universities?

LAWRENCE SURENDRA

Is Bengaluru's traffic congestion the only issue facing the state? What of the urgent concerns surrounding Karnataka's state higher education system? NITI Ayog reports indicate that Karnataka allocates only 2% of its GDP to higher education and ranks among the lowest in terms of such expenditure. Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra spend far more than Karnataka. This inadequate investment is mirrored in the neglect experienced by Karnataka's state universities.

According to media reports, existing universities require Rs 676 crore to address critical infrastructural and financial issues. In this context, the previous government's decision to create seven new universities in the final months of its tenure has posed additional challenges. Admissions to higher education institutions in the state appear to have declined – from 4,50,716 in 2022-2023 to 2,47,559 in 2025-2026 – raising concerns about the strain on capacity and resources.

The government has placed much emphasis on loans and partnerships that encourage the entry of private or foreign universities, with the expectation that these will improve competition and reduce the need for students to go abroad. The ADB loan of Rs 2,500 crore is a case in point. The state's higher education minister had stated that the presence of foreign universities would "encourage our private universities to match international curricula, pedagogy, and standards of education. This is a big change we look forward to in Karnataka." However, there was no word about improving the state of state universities.

While such initiatives may benefit a section of students, they risk widening disparities unless supported by a clear and simultaneous plan to strengthen state universities, which serve a much larger population and whose students often come from rural and disadvantaged backgrounds. Without equitable investment, there is a risk of creating a tiered higher education ecosystem that benefits only a few.

A headcount of teachers in old and prestigious universities such as Mysore University—one of the oldest and most prominent universities in the state—sheds light on the sorry state of affairs in the state's public education system. Several departments reportedly have minimal or no full-time faculty. For instance, the university's literature department that once had celebrated professors like U R Ananthamurthy and C D Narasimiah now does not have a full-time chairperson or professor.

Important academic programmes continue despite chronic staff shortages, even as significant funds are allocated to new administrative bodies, foreign visits, and other resource-intensive initiatives.

Key administrative decisions remain pending, and pressing current issues of the state universities remain unresolved. Senior faculty affected by university bifurcations are yet to receive clarity on postings, and frequent changes at the senior bureaucratic level within the higher education department have raised concerns about continuity and long-term planning. Currently the casualties of frequent changes, stability and transparency in governance are crucial for addressing present challenges and planning for future needs.

Karnataka's higher education system requires structural reform and renewed commitment. Priorities should include strengthening the quality and autonomy of State universities, ensuring responsible financial management, and instituting regular monitoring and audit mechanisms to prevent leakage and ensure accountability. A restructured Higher Education Commission—comprising respected heads of central and state institutions and senior officials from education, finance, and science and t—could provide strategic direction.

State universities remain vital institutions for social mobility, regional development, and inclusive growth. Their survival depends not only on funding but also on stewardship, vision and a commitment to equitable access. Students, teachers and administrators across the State hope that the coming years will bring a renewed focus on these priorities. Effective reforms and responsible planning can ensure that Karnataka's publicly funded higher education system remains a strong and sustainable pillar of opportunity for future generations.

(The writer is a chemical engineer, environmental economist, and writer)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: DECEMBER 1975

Ordinance detention till end of Emergency

New Delhi, December 14
President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed today promulgated an Ordinance further amending the Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act (COFEPOSA) by which the period of detention of an offender under the Act has been linked up with the emergency. According to the ordinance the detention period under the Act will now be one or two years or till the period of emergency. The ordinance will affect all persons at present under detention under the Act.

25 YEARS AGO: DECEMBER 2000

Gore abandons campaign, leaves stage to Bush

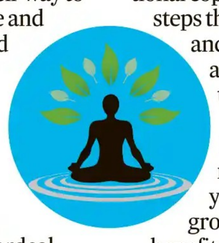
Washington, Dec 14 (Reuters)
Democrat Al Gore conceded defeat in the presidential election to Republican George W Bush in a patriotic speech, saying, "May God bless his stewardship of this country." On the 36th day since an election that was virtually tied, the vice president finally yielded yesterday (local time), calling on all Americans to unite behind "President-elect Bush" who will be sworn in as president on January 20, 2001. Mr Bush was to follow with his own address at 10 pm EST (0830 hrs IST today).

OASIS | DOROTHY VICTOR

Strength in solidarity

A hard-working couple, known throughout the locality for their dedication and services for over two decades, suddenly found themselves facing an unimaginable crisis. As daily wage earners who relied on consistent work to support their modest livelihood, they had built their lives through sheer perseverance. Without warning, the wife was diagnosed with a rare and life-threatening medical condition. The news struck them like a bolt from the blue and their world seemed to crumble overnight.

Recognising the gravity of the situation, with the help of my family, I stepped in to offer whatever initial help we could. During those first confusing days of tests and uncertainty, two doctors, one a long-time customer of the couple and another, a close family friend, went out of their way to guide us. Their timely advice and willingness to assist provided much-needed clarity at a difficult moment.



Yet we knew that navigating such a difficult path required more than goodwill alone. I remembered an acquaintance who had gone through a similar ordeal in his own family and had faced it with remarkable courage. When I reached out to him, he responded immediately and generously. Without hesitation, he shared the wealth of experience and knowledge he had gained. He gave his insights into treatment options, emotional coping strategies, and practical steps the family could take. His guidance brought clarity and comfort at a time when fear and worry threatened to overwhelm.

Realising that the couple had quietly supported so many in the community for years, I created a WhatsApp group with residents who had benefited from their services. The response was instantaneous. Messages of encouragement and financial help poured in. People who had known them only through everyday interactions now expressed their support.

The wife, though shaken by the suddenness of her diagnosis, was touched by this outpouring of compassion. After the initial shock and sorrow, she began to find a renewed sense of resolve. While the road ahead remains stretched and demanding, the solidarity of so many has strengthened her spirit and given her a new-found courage to face her battle.

This experience is a powerful reminder of what a community can achieve when compassion is put into action. In moments of crisis, solidarity becomes a lifeline. It is proof that shared humanity can light even the darkest paths.

Prez permits introduction of 'VB-G RAM G' Bill

NEW DELHI, DHNS: President Droupadi Murmu has recommended the introduction of 'Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) — VB-G RAM G — Bill, 2025' in the Lok Sabha.

She has also given her permission for the introduction of the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India Bill, 2025 (SHANTI Bill, 2025).

While the content of VB-G RAM G Bill is not immediately known, it is speculated that the proposed legislation may deal with the existing Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. There were also reports that MGNREGA will be renamed 'Pujya Bapu Gramin Rozgar Yojana'.

From the title of the bill, it appears that it deals with guarantees for employment in rural areas and a livelihood mission. This is the second bill to have 'Viksit Bharat' in the nomenclature of a draft legislation, the first being the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill 2025, which merges various higher educational bodies into one.

The President has recommended the introduction of the bill in the Lok Sabha under Article 117(1) of the Constitution and also the consideration of the bill under Article 117(3), according to the bulletin issued by the Lok Sabha on Sunday night.

The SHANTI Bill has been recommended for introduction under Article 117(1).

Provisions in Article 117 make it clear that a money bill shall not be introduced or moved except on the recommendation of the President, and a bill making such a provision shall not be introduced in the Rajya Sabha.

Fadnavis, Shinde visit RSS HQ; Ajit skips again

NAGPUR, PTI: Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, his deputy Eknath Shinde and ruling BJP, Shiv Sena legislators visited RSS founder K B Hedgewar's memorial here on Sunday, while Deputy CM Ajit Pawar and other NCP leaders skipped the event.

Ajit Pawar

During the visit, Shiv Sena chief Shinde congratulated the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh for completing 100 years of its formation, lauded present RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat as a "true patriot", and said this is the year of "centenary of patriotism".

The winter session of the Maharashtra legislature is currently underway in Nagpur.

Ministers and MLAs belonging to the BJP visit the memorial of Hedgewar and the second Sanghchalak, M S Golwalkar, at the Smruti Mandir in Reshimbagh every year during the winter session of the state legislature.

Last year, MLAs Raju Karemore and Rajkumar Badole were the only representatives of the Ajit Pawar-led NCP, which has 41 legislators in the Assembly, at the Smruti Mandir.

New bill proposes Rs 2-cr fine on people opening varsities sans govt nod

Current law imposes a penalty of up to Rs 1,000 for illegally using word 'university'

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

COMPLIANCE CRACKDOWN

- Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan bill aims to merge UGC, AICTE and NCTA
- Resulting Higher Education Commission will have Regulatory Council, Accreditation Council, and Standards Council
- Regulatory Council will have the power to penalise higher-education institutions for contravention of laws, rules, or regulations

Anyone setting up a private university or a higher-educational institution without government approval would have to cough up at least Rs 2 crore as a penalty, while the institution could face "immediate closure", according to a new Bill to regulate the higher-education sector.

The existing UGC Act imposes a penalty of up to Rs 1,000 for illegally using the word "university".

The new Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025, also envisages a Rs 10-75 lakh penalty, or more, for various grades of offences. It has also recommended the stoppage of funds, modifying powers to grant degrees and diplomas, and the closure of institutions, besides the penalties.

The provisions of the new Bill, which also aims to merge the UGC, AICTE, and the NCTA, among others, into one regulator, come against the backdrop of mushrooming higher-education institutions, with some misleadingly claiming to be private varsities.

The Centre is likely to introduce this piece of legislation, earlier called the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) Bill, in the last week of the Winter session of Parliament.

The Opposition is set to demand that the bill be sent to a Parliamentary Standing Committee for further scrutiny.

The bill purportedly aims to provide an effective, enabling, and responsive system of regulation to encourage integrity, excellence, and public-spiritedness in higher education.

Under the proposed Higher Education Commission, there will be a Regulatory Council, Accreditation Council, and Standards Council.

The Regulatory Council will be empowered to impose penalties on higher-education institutions for contravention of the provisions of this Act or other rules or regulations.

It can impose a penalty of not less than Rs 10 lakh on higher-education institutions that violate the new provisions if they do not rectify the mistakes within the period specified in the notice issued to them.

If the institution contravenes the provisions again, the council can impose a penalty not less than Rs 30 lakh or recommend to the Union or state government or appropriate body for the removal of persons found responsible for such violations or review the level of autonomy accorded, pending rectification. It can also recommend to the government to withhold grants to the institutions.

The institutions that continuously violate provisions may face a penalty of not less than Rs 75 lakh and a recommendation to the government to modify the right to confer certificates, diplomas, or degrees.

It can also urge the affiliating university to revoke the higher-education institution's affiliation, or even close it.

Cong targets Modi, Shah & EC at rally against 'vote chori'

Rahul terms it the biggest attack on Constitution

NEW DELHI, DHNS

RALLYING CRY

- Rahul claims poll body acts at BJP's behest, says EC must serve people, not PM
- Cites 5.5 cr signatures against vote theft, vows to fight with satya and ahimsa
- Names CEC and ECs, warns of retrospective legal action
- Kharge brands BJP leaders 'gaddars' and 'dramebaaz'

LoP in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, party MPs Sonia Gandhi and KC Venugopal hold copies of the Constitution of India during the 'Vote Chor, Gaddi Chhod' rally, at Ramlila Maidan in New Delhi, on Sunday. PTI

Congress leaders on Sunday launched a sharp attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and the Election Commission over "vote chori", with Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi claiming that the poll body was acting at the behest of the ruling BJP. He said the commission must remind itself that it is India's poll body, not the prime minister's.

At the party's 'Vote Chor, Gaddi Chhod' rally at Ramlila Maidan in Delhi, Rahul said that people would throw out the "RSS government" within five minutes if votes were not stolen. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also joined him in targeting Modi, Shah, the BJP and the EC.

Priyanka said every step of the electoral process arouses "suspicion" and challenged the BJP to contest an election using paper ballots. Kharge alleged that BJP functionaries are "gaddars" (traitors) and "dramebaaz" who must be removed from power.

Addressing the rally after collecting over 5.5 crore signatures against "vote chori", Rahul asserted that the Congress would fight against the theft of people's rights and remove the "RSS government" through satya and ahimsa (truth and non-violence).

He described vote theft as the "biggest attack on Ambedkar's Constitution", claiming that "they managed to squeeze small businessmen, implement wrong GST and demonetisation" through electoral malpractice. If there is no vote chori, you will throw them out of power in five minutes, he said.

Naming Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioners Satbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi, Rahul alleged that the poll panel was carrying out tasks assigned by the government, which had granted them legal immunity. He warned the Congress would amend the law retrospectively and take action against them.

"We will stand with satya and remove the Narendra Modi-RSS government from power. They have satta (power), and they indulge in vote chori... Don't forget, the Election Commission is India's EC and not Modi's EC," he said.

While referring to his allegations of vote theft in Haryana, Maharashtra and Karnataka, Rahul claimed that Shah's hands were "trembling" while replying to the debate on electoral reforms in the Lok Sabha, as he had no answers to the questions raised by them.

"Look at Narendra Modi's face, and you'll realise that his confidence has run out. They know that their vote theft has been caught... They are brave only as long as he holds power. The day power is gone, his bravery will also vanish," he said.

Priyanka alleged that the recent polls were fought by the BJP by jailing chief ministers without evidence and absolving leaders who joined the saffron party. She also claimed that the Bihar elections witnessed vote chori and referred to the distribution of Rs 10,000 to women beneficiaries during the campaign.

Parl session nears end with little time for key bills

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

TICKING AWAY

- Winter Session enters final leg on Monday; only 5 working days left
- In 10 working days, Lok Sabha has clocked 62 hrs 07 mins of work, while Rajya Sabha 57 hours 30 minutes
- The govt has indicated that it plans to bring around a dozen Bills, including 10 new ones, but it has not introduced any of them except for two

The Winter Session of Parliament is entering its last leg on Monday, with the Modi government having very little time to push through key legislations.

There are five more working days, but December 19, the last day being Friday, is likely to see adjournment of the session by early afternoon, leaving virtually four days of scheduled business.

The discussion on the first batch of supplementary grants and Appropriation Bills has not concluded in the Lok Sabha, while one on election reforms is continuing in the Rajya Sabha. The discussion on supplementary grants will be scheduled in the RS after the ongoing debate concludes.

While the first two days of the session saw protests over the demand to discuss the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls, both Houses functioned without much disruption.

In 10 working days, the LS has clocked 62 hours and seven minutes of work, while the Rajya Sabha has logged 57 hours and 30 minutes.

The Lok Sabha discussed 'Vande Mataram for 11 hours and 32 minutes, while the one on election reforms saw 12 hours and 59 minutes of debate. For the Rajya Sabha, it was 13 hours and 49 minutes of Vande Mataram, while the debate on election reforms has so far seen two hours and 57 minutes of debate. For both debates, 10 hours each were allocated in both Houses.

After the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, suggested that there should be a debate on air pollution, the government has indicated its willingness to hold a discussion.

So far, three bills have been passed—Manipur Goods and Services Tax (Second Amendment) Bill, 2025; Central Excise (Amendment) Bill, 2025; and Health Security-cum-National Security Bill, 2025.

The government has indicated that it plans to introduce around a dozen bills, including 10 new ones, but has so far introduced only two.

The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill will not be tabled this time, as the joint committee examining it has been granted time till the next session. The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill is also unlikely to come up for passing, though the panel is set to adopt its report on Monday.

Never allowed territory for activities against Bangladesh's interests: India

NEW DELHI, PTI

DIPLOMATIC ROW

- Bangladesh summoned Indian envoy over Sheikh Hasina's statements and Awami League activities.
- India rejects Dhaka's election sabotage charges, says its soil has not been used against Bangladesh's interests.
- India calls for peaceful, credible polls in Bangladesh, urging the interim government to ensure law and order ahead of the February 12 elections.

India on Sunday asserted that it has never allowed its territory to be used for activities inimical to the interests of Bangladesh and pressed for holding the upcoming parliamentary polls in that country in a peaceful atmosphere.

India's reaction came hours after the Bangladesh foreign ministry summoned Indian envoy to Dhaka, Pranay Verma, and conveyed its concern over former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's "incendiary" statements from Indian soil.

According to a readout released by Dhaka, the foreign ministry also brought to Verma's notice the activities of some members of Hasina-led Awami League while staying in India.

"India categorically rejects the assertions made by the interim government of Bangladesh in its press note," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

It said India has consistently reiterated its position in favour of free, fair, inclusive and credible elections in Bangladesh in a peaceful atmosphere.

"India has never allowed its territory to be used for activities inimical to the interests of the friendly people of Bangladesh," the MEA said.

"We expect that the interim government of Bangladesh will take all necessary measures for ensuring internal law and order, including for the purpose of holding peaceful elections," it said in a statement.

The parliamentary elections in Bangladesh will be held on February 12. It will be the first general election after the collapse of the Hasina government in August last year following massive protests.

The Awami League has rejected the elections saying the interim government led by Muhammad Yunus will not be able to hold the polls in a free and normal environment.

"It is now clear that the current occupying authority is entirely biased, and that under their control it is impossible to ensure a fair and normal environment where transparency, neutrality, and the people's will can be reflected," the Awami League said in a statement on Thursday.

Last month, Hasina, 78, was sentenced to death by a special tribunal in Dhaka for "crimes against humanity" over her government's brutal crackdown on the student-led protests last year.

The Awami League leader has been living in India since she fled Bangladesh on August 5 last year in the face of the protests.

Modi condemns terror attack in Australia

NEW DELHI, PTI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday condemned the terrorist attack in Australia and expressed solidarity with the people of that country in their hour of grief.

"Strongly condemn the ghastly terrorist attack carried out today at Bondi Beach, Australia, targeting people celebrating the first day of the Jewish festival of Hanukkah," the prime minister said.

"On behalf of the people of India, I extend my sincere condolences to the families who lost their loved ones. We stand in solidarity with the people of Australia in this hour of grief," he said.

The prime minister said India has "zero tolerance" for terrorism and supports the fight against all its forms and manifestations.

Inquiry ordered into bribe charge against 3 Raj MLAs

JAIPUR, PTI: The Rajasthan government on Sunday ordered a high-level inquiry into allegations against three legislators seeking commissions for the release of MLA funds, while the BJP and Congress issued notices seeking leaders' explanations.

As part of the action, the MLA LAD accounts of the accused leaders have been frozen pending the outcome of the inquiry.

The action was taken following a sting operation by a newspaper accusing BJP MLA from Khinvsar Revantram Danga, Congress MLA from Hindaun Anita Jatav and independent MLA from Bayana Ritu Banawat of taking commission in exchange for a sanctioning amount from MLA LAD fund.

"Our government follows a strict zero-tolerance policy against corruption by any public servant. No matter how influential a person may be, if found guilty of corruption, they will not be spared," Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma said in a post on X.

Leader of Opposition in Rajasthan Assembly Tikaram Jully said that the party has issued a notice to MLA Anita Jatav, and an inquiry is underway. He demanded that the government rise above party politics, conduct an inquiry against all the guilty legislators.

Pankaj Chaudhary takes charge as UP BJP chief

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

UP CM Adityanath and new UP BJP chief Pankaj Chaudhary in Lucknow on Sunday. PTI

Union Minister Pankaj Chaudhary, a seven-time MP and an influential OBC leader, was on Sunday formally declared the new president of the BJP's Uttar Pradesh unit.

Chaudhary, who hails from the electorally influential "kurmi" community, was elected unopposed to the post as no other nomination paper was filed on Saturday.

Union minister Piyush Goyal formally announced his name as the new UP BJP president in the state capital.

Speaking after being appointed the new state chief, Chaudhary said he would ensure respect for the ordinary party workers and that their views would be given due importance. He also exuded confidence that the BJP would return to power with more seats in the 2027 UP Assembly polls.

Chaudhary's appointment was being viewed in political circles here as an attempt to counter the rival Samajwadi Party (SP)'s "PDA" — pichda, Dalit, and alpsankhyak, or backward classes, Dalits, and minorities — formula in the state.

Chaudhary is a member of the "kurmi" community, which has a sizeable presence in several eastern UP districts.

The BJP's tally in the state in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls declined to 33 from 62 in the 2019 elections.

The SP, which won only five seats in the 2019 LS polls, managed to corner 37 seats in 2024. SP candidates fared well in several Backward Class-dominated seats in eastern UP. Its success was then attributed to the PDA formula.

Cong seeks to woo more Left Front allies in Kerala

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

SHIFTING VOTES

- CPM, CPI worried over Hindu votes drifting to BJP, struggle to stem the flow
- BJP wins Thiruvananthapuram, secures more wards but limited minority outreach impact
- Cong likely to court Kerala Congress (M)
- Analysts see UDF regaining minority support, Left continues to lose ground among Hindu voters

With an impressive performance in the local body polls, the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) in Kerala is likely to explore options to woo more parties from the ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF). The CPM and the CPI, meanwhile, appear concerned over their failure to plug the flow of Hindu votes to the BJP.

Though the BJP improved its tally by winning the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation and securing more wards across the state, its outreach to minority communities seems to have made little impact so far.

The Congress is expected to make fresh efforts to bring back the Kerala Congress (M), a regional party with significant influence in central Kerala's Christian strongholds. The KC(M), aligned with the Left since 2020, is reportedly uneasy over its poor performance in the local-body polls.

Political analysts point out that the election results clearly suggest the UDF could regain minority communities' firm support, while the CPM and the CPI continue to struggle with the steady shift of Hindu votes to the BJP.

Following the setback in the 2024 local body polls, CPM leaders openly voiced concerns over Hindu-Ezhava votes drifting to the BJP. A CPM state leader also criticised the Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP), a key Ezhava community forum, for moving closer to the BJP.

Initiatives such as the Global Ayyappa Sangamam and Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's public display of rapport with SNDP general secretary Vellappally Natesan were seen as attempts to woo the Hindu vote bank.

However, those efforts collapsed when the Sabarimala Ayyappa temple gold heist came to light.

"The shift of Hindu votes to the BJP is evident in this election as well, with it gaining mostly in areas where the Left suffered losses. Hindu-Ezhava-dominated districts such as Kollam and Alappuzha are clear examples," said political analyst J Prabhash.

He noted that CPM leaders' and SNDP leader Natesan's communal campaigns appeared to have helped the Congress regain the minority communities' support.

The local body poll results have boosted the BJP's hopes of winning several seats in the upcoming Assembly elections. In Thiruvananthapuram alone, the party secured most of the wards in at least three Assembly constituencies. However, it failed to make significant inroads in central Kerala.

Meanwhile, having won control of the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation, the BJP is now planning to bring Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the state capital within 45 days to unveil a major development plan for the city.

Flying dreams lift Gadchiroli tribal kids

Exposure visits to Isro, Sriharikota help curb school dropouts

MRITYUNJAY BOSE
GADCHIROLI, DHNS

Children in Gadchiroli. DH PHOTO

The thrill to fly in a commercial jet is giving wings to students of the remotest villages of Maharashtra's once-Maoist-affected Gadchiroli district.

Over the past couple of years, the Gadchiroli district administration has taken batches of students to the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh and the Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) headquarters in Bengaluru.

"Early next year, we are planning to take students to New Delhi, where they will meet President Droupadi Murmu," said Fadchiroli Assistant Commissioner (Social Justice & Special Assistance Department) Sachin Madavi.

"Standards 9 and 10 see a high dropout rate among students. We have been able to arrest that," Madavi, who hails from the Madia tribal community, told the *DH*.

"The visit to Isro facilities was very exciting... A large number of students who visited spoke Telugu, as did many among the scientists... The students felt at home as there was no language barrier," he recounted.

"We are very excited... It has been a great experience for us. Here, what we learn is through experience," said students, pointing out how classrooms and labs were named after prominent Indian freedom-fighters, social reformers, and scientists.

One of the rooms is named after former test pilot Wing Commander Rakesh Sharma (Retd), the first Indian in space. "Such people inspire us," said a student, also pointing out rooms named after former scientist and President A P J Abdul Kalam, and physicist and Nobel laureate C V Raman.

"We give experience to students. We also have a concept of a travelling library within the school, from where the students can pick up books, read and then return," said D G Ambilkar, the principal of the school. "We have ensured that students are dressed properly and study in proper classrooms. We have given the best educational aids," said Madavi.

Marathi leader to be PM soon: Chavan stirs political pot

MUMBAI, DHNS: Former Maharashtra chief minister and senior Congress leader Prithviraj Chavan sparked a political stir on Saturday by claiming that a major political change could take place on December 19, with a "Marathi leader" replacing Narendra Modi as Prime Minister.

The BJP and its allies, however, dismissed Chavan's remarks.

Speaking at a book release event in Pune, Chavan said the impending release of the Epstein files in the US could trigger political upheaval in India, potentially leading to a change in leadership.

He referred to his December 1 post on X, in which he had asked, "What will happen in Indian politics when the US Congress releases the details of the Epstein files?"

Chavan He alleged that secret video recordings, purportedly obtained using hidden cameras, contain photographs and videos of several political leaders, some of whose names have already surfaced on social media.

"A major political earthquake could occur after this information is made public, and a Marathi person could become the Prime Minister of the country," Chavan said.

He said his party lacks the numbers to form a government, suggesting that any such leadership change would come from another party.

Goa nightclubs face crackdown ahead of Christmas, New Year

PANAJI, PTI

Goa's nightlife faces a crackdown ahead of the Christmas and New Year season, with the state government launching an intensive drive to inspect and seal the establishments flouting norms after a deadly nightclub fire claimed 25 lives.

As the state, famous for its scenic beaches, gears up for its busiest fortnight spanning Christmas and New Year, the crackdown has already forced some nightclubs to shut, while the fate of others hangs in the balance. A team of personnel from the district administration, fire and emergency services and police have been inspecting all the nightclubs in the North Goa tourism belt, officials said on Sunday.

The drive began after the fire incident at Birch by Romeo Lane nightclub on December 6 left 25 persons dead. "We are inspecting all the nightclubs, checking their licences and permissions. Any club found to be violating the norms is sealed," a government officer said.

The team has the power to seal a club flouting norms immediately, another official said.

So far, the team has sealed two prominent nightclubs - Goya Club and Cafe CO2 Goa - both located at Vagator. Cafe CO2 Goa was situated on a cliff overlooking the Arabian Sea.

He said Goya Club was built on agricultural land, while Cafe CO2 Goa did not have the No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Fire and Emergency Services Department and lacked structural stability.

The Fire and Emergency Services Department has also ordered revocation of the NOC granted to Diaz Pool Club and Bar at Anjuna in North Goa, another official said.

A surprise inspection was conducted at the premises on Saturday, during which it was observed that the existing fire prevention and safety arrangements installed there were inadequate and required upgradation, as per the order issued by Divisional Fire Officer Shripad Gawas.

SC expresses 'dismay' at MP High Court for condoning 1,612-day delay

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court has taken a strong objection to the Madhya Pradesh High Court's decision to allow the first appeal by the state government in a civil suit by condoning a delay of almost 4.5 years.

A bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and Prasanna B Varale set aside the HC's September 1 order while expressing displeasure over the ignorance of law.

"We are dismayed to say from the tenor of the impugned order that the HC condoned the delay of 1,612 days on mere asking without highlighting the sufficient cause that might have been assigned by the state," the bench said.

After hearing advocate Dushyant Parashar for the appellant Shankargir and Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati for the state government, the bench pointed out that the law — insofar as limitation and condoning delay was concerned — was well-settled.

"We wonder if the HC is aware of the decisions of this court in Union of India Vs Jahangir Byramji Jeejeebhoy (D) Through His Lr, (2024) and Shivamma (Dead) By Lrs Vs Karnataka Housing Board & Ors (2025)," the bench said.

In the recent past, the bench pointed out, the apex court had delivered judgments explaining the manner in which sufficient cause had to be looked into and the plea for the condonation of delay was to be considered.

Bhati submitted that the delay had occurred because of the Covid-19 pandemic. "However, we do not find a word in this regard in the impugned order of the HC," the bench said.

The court remanded the matter to the HC for fresh consideration. The HC should hear the parties once again and pass a fresh order in accordance with the law, it said.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie

FOR DINNER TONIGHT, LET'S MAKE IT LADY'S CHOICE
WOW, I'M SURPRISED! YOU USUALLY LIKE TO PICK OUT THE RESTAURANT!
WHAT ABOUT MAGNOLIA CAFE?
ARE YOU SURE? WHAT ABOUT TITO'S TACOS OR FAT FRANKIE'S FISH FRY?
OR LULU'S LIMBURGER LUAU OR SHERMAN'S SHELLFISH SHACK?

Hagar The Horrible

MY LONGTIME GIRLFRIEND BROKE UP WITH ME!
I'M SO SORRY, LARS, BUT YOU WILL FIND A NEW LOVE...
SOMEONE YOU CAN RECYCLE ALL YOUR STORIES WITH!
YES! I'M FEELING BETTER ALREADY!

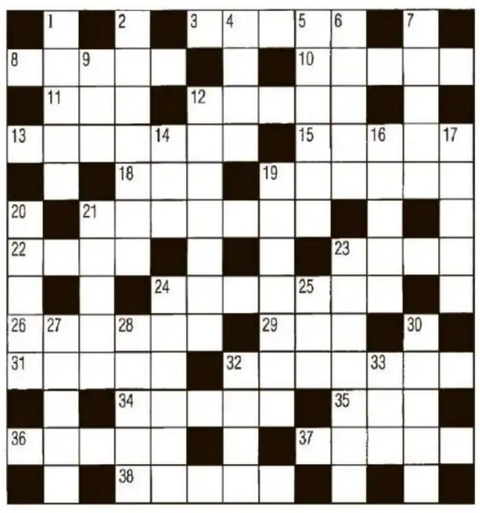
Beetle Bailey

Peanuts

SPIKE'S HERE!
HE IS?
TELL HIM ABOUT HOW WE'RE GOING TO FIND A HOME FOR HIM!
TELL HIM ABOUT HOW SOME LUCKY FAMILY IS GOING TO ADOPT HIM...
LUCKY FAMILY?

Marvin

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12309



CRYPTIC

ACROSS
3 They're licked and eaten (5)
8 Machine used for work in the Mediterranean (5)
10 Wrongly rinse in something sticky (5)
11 Blend number 1009 (3)
12 As eaten with some tinned potatoes? (5)
13 He has a job taking care (7)
15 It's noticeably tall we are, in height (5)
18 Source of a bit of a scare on the road? (3)
19 The bullfighter rushed right to the ring! (6)
21 Continue making comedies (5,2)
22 I get to the fore, nominally (4)
23 In fact, decided to dispense with detectives (4)
24 Broadcast jazzy singing half the winter (7)
26 Badly stored in a country area (6)
29 An atom in motion (3)
31 A tracking aid (5)
32 Took undue interest but posed no problem (7)
34 As things are, a mere existence (5)
35 Possibly not a weight? (3)
36 Showing envy out of inexperience? (5)
37 It's not great at the shallow end (5)
38 A person not getting on, one gathers? (5)

DOWN
1 She won out as a mother (5)
2 A sort of wave of support (7)
4 In the army, you learn (4)
5 A little matter for the professional heavyweight (6)
6 His wife gives him an article (5)
7 A better judge? (5)
9 On course, apt to be in a hole (3)
12 See the misguided rector as right! (7)
14 Jack may be low in cigarettes (3)
16 River mistaken for a sewer? (5)
17 Anchorages shown on ordinary maps (5)
19 Sounding one's horn somewhere near Streatham (7)
20 Learns the fishy bits about a trading centre (5)
21 Capital rhyme for a tyro (5)
23 Meant to dote madly on little Dennis (7)
24 Calm directions to a Frenchman (6)
25 A sound figure but excessively so! (3)
27 Some composer's opus for a long time (5)
28 New robes, not gaudy (5)
30 The part involving decimalisation (5)
32 Price cut? (4)
33 Music with "go" (3)

ACROSS
3 Delicate strands (5)
8 Brimless cap (5)
10 Aircraft detection device (5)
11 Fish (3)
12 Celestial body (5)
13 Clothing (7)
15 Belong, conform (3,2)
18 High hill (3)
19 Threat (6)
21 Colonist (7)
22 Went fast (4)
23 Deceased (4)
24 Conundrums (7)
26 Ability to judge well (6)
29 Tennis shot (3)
31 Backless shoes (5)
32 Lockjaw (7)
34 Governs (5)
35 Metallic element (3)
36 Note value (5)
37 Native American dwelling (5)
38 Molars, say (5)

DOWN
1 Oozes (5)
2 Unduly deferred (7)
4 Object of worship (4)
5 Favour (6)
6 Glossy fabric (5)
7 Fundamental (5)
9 Agent (3)
12 Sure (7)
14 Decompose (3)
16 Stories (5)
17 Requirements (5)
19 Interferes (7)
20 Major religion (5)
21 South Korean capital (5)
23 Formal discussions (7)
24 Begin again (6)
25 Auction item (3)
27 Herb (5)
28 Be worthy of (5)
30 Wind-driven sand hills (5)
32 Marquee, for example (4)
33 Pinch (3)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 2658

ACROSS: 1 Supreme, 5 Hatless, 9 Chopper, 10 Lyrical, 11 Exude, 12 Elbow-room, 13 So to speak, 15 Sheen, 16 Showy, 18 Godfather, 21 In the lead, 24 Gaunt, 25 Ghastly, 26 Opinion, 27 Emerald, 28 Evasive.

DOWN: 1 Success, 2 Product, 3 Expressly, 4 Eerie, 5 Half-baked, 6 Threw, 7 Enclose, 8 Solomon, 14 Eagle-eyed, 15 Shangri-la, 16 Shingle, 17 Outface, 19 Houdini, 20 Retinue, 22 Extra, 23 Drone.

◆SU-DO-KU-6777◆

		3		5		2	6	
5		4	3			9		
9			2					
	9		8			6		3
	4						1	
3		5			7		9	
					2			7
		7			9	1		6
	3	2		1		8		

hard

SOLUTION TO 6776

3	1	6	5	8	7	2	4	9
7	5	8	9	2	4	6	3	1
9	4	2	6	1	3	8	7	5
5	7	3	4	6	8	9	1	2
1	6	4	7	9	2	5	8	3
8	2	9	1	3	5	7	6	4
4	9	7	8	5	1	3	2	6
2	8	5	3	4	6	1	9	7
6	3	1	2	7	9	4	5	8

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

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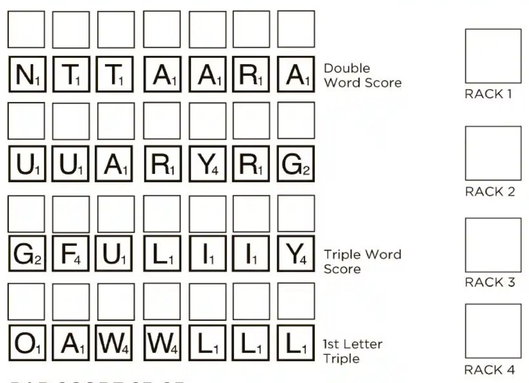

N1 T1 T1 A1 A1 R1 A1
Double Word Score
U1 U1 A1 R1 Y4 R1 G2
G2 F4 U1 L1 I1 I1 Y4
Triple Word Score
O1 A1 W4 W4 L1 L1 L1
1st Letter Triple
RACK 1
RACK 2
RACK 3
RACK 4

PAR SCORE 85-95
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

SATURDAY'S SOLUTION

L1 I1 Q10 U1 E1 U1 R1	RACK 1 =	98
D2 U1 M3 B3 L1 Y4	RACK 2 =	42
C3 L1 A1 S1 P3 E1 D2	RACK 3 =	86
D2 E1 A1 D2 M3 A1 N1	RACK 4 =	83
PAR SCORE 200-210	JUDD'S TOTAL	309

JUMBLE®

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

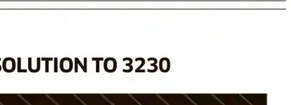
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

CLNUE

CORUC

SMTEYS

DOMLYE


Better than Therapy
CUPCAKES
Thank you for your business!
Well, this is goodbye. On to our next adventure!
This is sad, but I guess it was time.
6
5
THEIR STORE HAD GONE OUT OF BUSINESS, SO THEY VISITED ONE LAST TIME TO GET ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: SLANT GUEST LAZILY FELINE
Answer: They knew when the author would be reading her story because there were — TELL-TALE SIGNS

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HITORI-3231

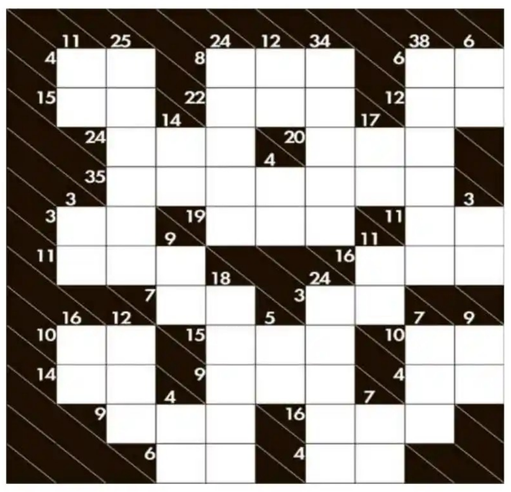
5	1	8	7	8	4	6	6
1	4	5	8	2	1	3	7
8	7	1	2	3	1	1	4
4	5	2	3	8	7	1	5
1	8	1	4	1	6	7	1
3	1	1	5	4	1	2	8
6	3	8	1	1	7	4	6
2	5	4	1	1	8	5	6

SOLUTION TO 3230

7	8	1	3	4	■	2	■
4	■	2	1	■	7	6	5
8	4	■	2	7	6	3	1
3	■	7	■	6	1	■	8
2	7	6	4	8	■	1	3
■	1	3	■	5	4	■	6
1	3	■	7	2	5	4	■
■	5	8	6	■	3	7	4

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

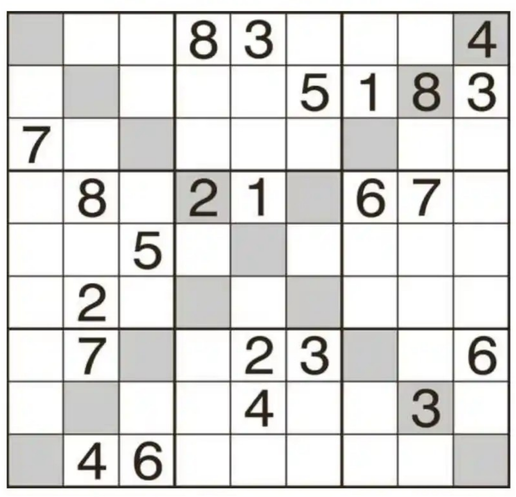
KAKURO- 3231



SOLUTION TO 3230

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3766

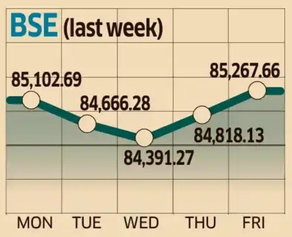


SOLUTION TO 3765

3	4	7	8	1	6	9	2	5
2	9	8	4	3	5	7	1	6
6	1	5	7	2	9	4	3	8
1	5	6	2	7	3	8	9	4
7	3	4	9	8	1	6	5	2
8	2	9	6	5	4	3	7	1
4	6	2	5	9	7	1	8	3
5	7	1	3	4	8	2	6	9
9	8	3	1	6	2	5	4	7

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

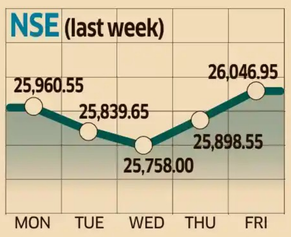
BSE (last week)



*Data as of Dec 12

TOP GAINERS		TOP LOSERS	
TATA STEEL	2.87%	ASIANPAINT	-6.80%
ETERNAL	1.92%	BEL	-4.25%
TITAN	1.73%	HINDUNILVR	-3.33%
MARUTI	1.50%	BAJFINANCE	-2.96%
ULTRACEMCO	1.08%	TRENT	-2.78%

NSE (last week)



TOP GAINERS		TOP LOSERS	
HINDALCO IND	3.50%	ASIAN PAINTS	-6.86%
GRASIM INDS	3.27%	HEROMOTOCO	-6.15%
TATA STEEL	2.86%	BEL	-4.29%
ETERNAL	1.93%	HINDUNILVR	-3.34%
TITAN CO	1.75%	JSW STEEL	-3.16%

Sensex (52-week)

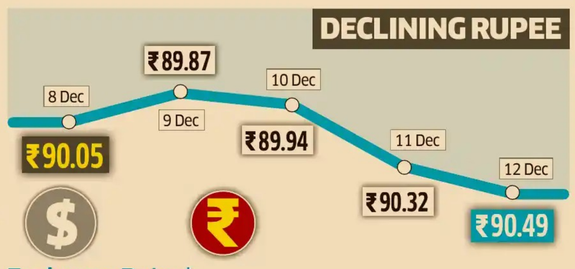
Dec 12, 2024	Dec 12, 2025	
81,289.96	85,267.66	4.89%

Nifty (52-week)

Dec 12, 2024	Dec 12, 2025	
24,548.70	26,046.95	6.10%

10-year Bond yield 6.59%

DECLINING RUPEE



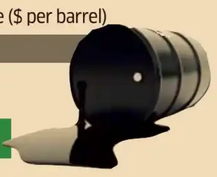
Exchange Rates*

Dollar	₹ 90.49	SGD	₹ 70.09
Pound	₹ 121.05	Yen (100 units)	₹ 58.03
Euro	₹ 106.07		

*Price at which banks sell

Crude Oil Rate ($ per barrel)

BRENT CRUDE
$61.12*
-0.26%
*Rate as of Dec 13



Bengaluru fuel pump price*

(Retail)
Petrol* ₹102.92 ₹0%
Diesel* ₹90.99 ₹0%

*Rates as of Dec 14 #Rate change compared with yesterday

Commodity watch

COFFEE

Category	Rate (Rs per 50 kg)*
Arabica Parchment	₹ 27000 - 27500
Arabica Cherry	₹ 13200 - 15600
Robusta Parchment	₹ 17000 - 17500
Robusta Cherry	₹ 10150 - 11000

*Rates as on Dec 9

Other Commodities

Silkworm cocoon (Rs per kg)*

Bivoltine (BV)	₹ 767
Cross Breed (CB)	₹ 686

*Average rates as on Dec 12

Indian rupee's turmoil has echoes of 2013

RBI governor's challenge in 2026 will be Trump's tantrums

ANDY MUKHERJEE
BLOOMBERG OPINION

Currency volatility is like history. No two episodes repeat, but some sure do rhyme. Which is why it's useful to compare the pall of gloom hanging over the Indian rupee with the rout of 2013.

Back then, the Federal Reserve had signaled that it was going to taper its quantitative easing programme and tighten monetary policy. Currently, the Fed is easing.

Also in 2013, India's inflation and current account deficit were out of control. Foreign investors clubbed the most-populous nation with Indonesia, Brazil, Turkey and South Africa. Morgan Stanley called them the Fragile Five.

That bleak landscape has changed dramatically. Domestic inflation is practically non-existent. And while exports swooned in October, pushing the trade gap to a record, few analysts are losing sleep over the country's ability to finance its trade shortfall.

Yes, the 50% tariff imposed by the US, the highest in Asia, is bad news for labour-intensive exports like textiles. But services trade should hold up. Although outsourcing firms in Bengaluru and Hyderabad are under attack from AI and US immigration policies, multinationals are placing AI tools directly in the hands of India's vast pool of young, technical talent, paying top dollar to create strategic intelligence hubs.

Sanjay Malhotra

Why then is the rupee Asia's worst-performing currency this year, down 5% against a falling dollar, and why are analysts bearish about its prospects?

For one thing, the much-awaited trade deal is yet to get done. In the absence of more reasonable 15-20% tariffs that Washington has offered to rival producers in Southeast Asia, rupee depreciation may be helping mitigate India's loss of competitiveness. A measure of that — the rupee's real effective exchange rate against trading partners — is down considerably from its 10-year average, though it took a bigger slide in 2013 to restore market equilibrium.

The other problem is the extreme despondence among overseas equity investors who have pulled out $17 billion this year. They don't think corporate earnings are rising fast enough to justify lofty valuations. The backdrop to profitability is no longer the double-digit growth in nominal GDP that could be taken for granted in the past. The most recent rate of GDP growth before adjusting for inflation was 8.7%. All hopes of a lift-off are pinned on household spending, aided by lower consumption taxes.

Investors, meanwhile, are obsessed with AI, where the local market has nothing to offer. Money managers aren't even requesting to meet Indian firms at investment banks' annual conferences. This is where history offers a contrast and a connection. The seeds of the Fragile-Five debacle were sown by the RBI buckling under political pressure and cutting rates in 2012 amid soaring fiscal deficits and untamed inflation. The economy overheated because real interest rates were too low. Nowadays, they are too high. Effective borrowing costs of more than 6 percentage points — inflation of 0.25% subtracted from the 10-year yield of 6.6% — are a problem for firms. And they can't expect any immediate respite. The RBI's easing cycle is believed to be over.

The rally in gold prices is encouraging imports for investment and speculation. BLOOMBERG

As for what's rhyming with the past, the answer is gold. In 2013, spooked by the loss of purchasing power of their home currency, Indians had switched to buying imported bullion in a big way, aggravating the trade deficit. This time around, it's the rally in gold prices that's encouraging imports for investment and speculation. This week's Fed rate cut has further whetted appetite. An exodus of foreign capital just as money leaves due to gold purchases is reminiscent of what happened 12 years ago. Besides, gold is no longer the only tradeable global asset available to the middle class to express its unhappiness with the rupee; there's also crypto.

The RBI wasn't too concerned when the rupee recently stumbled past 90 to the dollar. A cheaper currency is a shock absorber against US tariffs. But where's the floor? If the deal with Washington gets pushed to spring — it was supposed to get done this fall — markets may test Governor Sanjay Malhotra on just that question.

Traders know that the rupee at 100 (it's at 90.4 now) will be politically embarrassing. Prime Minister Narendra Modi rode to national power in 2014 by attacking the then-government for elevated fuel prices and a depreciated currency. Now the shoe is on the other foot, and bond investors are feeling the pinch. The central bank's net dollar shorts in the forward market — $64 billion in October — has them worried about a deeper slump.

After all, were the RBI to buy incoming greenbacks to square off its position, the rupee might slip further and squeeze returns for overseas fixed-income funds. So far this month, foreigners have sold 70.99 billion rupees ($790 million) of index-eligible Indian bonds. Even with the yield on the benchmark government note at its highest in more than three months, they seem unwilling to bite. Lest the rupee comes back to bite them.

The RBI lost the plot in 2013 amid the Fed's "Taper Tantrum". Malhotra's challenge in 2026 will be Trump's tantrums. With the US president signaling one day that a deal with India is close and vowing to punish it the next for dumping rice, the new threat looks every bit as scary.

Industry for 12% hike in Centre's capex in Budget

Suggests setting up Rs 150-L cr National Infrastructure Pipeline

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has pitched for setting up the second version of National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP 2.0), with an investment commitment of Rs 150 lakh crore over the next five years and 12% increase in the Centre's capital expenditure for 2026-27.

In its pre-Budget recommendation, the CII has also suggested a 10% increase in capital expenditure (capex) support to states.

For the current financial year, the Centre's budgeted capex stands at Rs 11.21 lakh crore. For 2024-25, it was budgeted at Rs 11.11 lakh crore. However, in the February 2025 Budget, the 2024-25 capex was revised downward to Rs 10.18 lakh crore.

In the Union Budget 2025-26 presented on February 1, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also announced Rs 1.5 lakh crore special interest-free loans to states for capital expenditure.

"The forthcoming Union Budget 2026-27 has to serve the dual role of stabiliser and growth enabler, and promoting investments will be one of the most critical components in this regard," said CII Director General Chandrajit Banerjee.

To strengthen project selection and execution, the industry lobby has called for institutionalising a Capital Expenditure Efficiency Framework (CEEF) to prioritise high-impact projects, track physical and financial progress, and evaluate outcomes based on productivity and regional spillovers.

CII's recommendations also include setting up Rs 150 lakh crore National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) 2.0 for the 2026-32 period, with a "clear list of shovel-ready projects, including PPP projects, to provide multi-year certainty to investors, developers, and states."

The first edition of the National Infrastructure Pipeline was launched in 2019 for a five-year period from FY2019-20 to FY2024-25, with an outlay of Rs 100 lakh crore.

To attract long-term capital for priority sectors, the CII has suggested establishing an NRI Investment Promotion Fund. This can be a government-private holding company, with up to 49% government stake, that channels NRI, foreign portfolio investor (FPI), and institutional investments into sectors such as infrastructure and AI, it said.

The Fund can raise capital through long-term convertible bonds benchmarked to FCNR rates, offering secure returns with equity upside, and including special India Global Diaspora Bonds, CII suggested.

The CII has also proposed strengthening the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) by forming a Sovereign Investment Strategy Council (SIFC) to align investments with national priorities, ensure governance excellence, and benchmark performance against leading global sovereign funds.

To boost private investments, the CII has pitched for incremental tax credits or compliance relaxations for firms achieving significant new investment, production, or tax contribution milestones.

"The Government of India has provided a big demand push via income tax relief in last year's Union Budget and recently via GST 2.0. Investments, especially in the private sector, will be the next big driver for economic growth that needs to be focused on in the next fiscal to continue the growth momentum," said Banerjee.

Mcap of 8 of top-10 most-valued firms erodes by Rs 79,129 crore

NEW DELHI, PTI: The combined market valuation of eight of the top-10 most-valued domestic firms eroded by Rs 79,129.21 crore last week, with Bajaj Finance and ICICI Bank taking the biggest hit, amid a largely bearish trend in equities.

Last week, the BSE benchmark index declined by 444.71 points or 0.51%.

From the top-10 pack, Reliance Industries and Larsen & Toubro were the only gainers, while HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Infosys, Bajaj Finance and Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) faced erosion from their valuation.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of Bajaj Finance dropped by Rs 19,289.7 crore to Rs 6,33,106.69 crore. ICICI Bank's valuation tumbled Rs 18,516.31 crore to Rs 9,76,668.15 crore.

The mcap of Bharti Airtel tanked Rs 13,884.63 crore to Rs 11,87,948.11 crore and that of State Bank of India diminished by Rs 7,846.02 crore to Rs 8,88,816.17 crore.

Infosys lost Rs 7,145.95 crore from its market valuation which stood at Rs 6,64,220.58 crore.

The mcap of TCS declined by Rs 6,783.92 crore to Rs 11,65,078.45 crore and that of HDFC Bank dipped by Rs 4,460.93 crore to Rs 15,38,558.71 crore. The valuation of LIC eroded by Rs 1,201.75 crore to Rs 5,48,820.05 crore.

However, the mcap of Reliance Industries jumped Rs 20,434.03 crore to Rs 21,05,652.74 crore.

Foreign portfolio investors withdraw Rs 17,955 crore from Indian equities in December

NEW DELHI, PTI: Foreign investors pulled out Rs 17,955 crore ($2 billion) from Indian equities in the first two weeks of this month, taking the total outflow to Rs 1.6 lakh crore ($18.4 billion) in 2025.

This sharp withdrawal follows a net outflow of Rs 3,765 crore in November, extending the pressure on domestic equity markets.

The current trend comes after a brief pause in October, when Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) infused Rs 14,610 crore, snapping a three-month streak of heavy withdrawals. FPIs sold equities worth Rs 23,885 crore in September, Rs 34,990 crore in August, and Rs 17,700 crore in July.

According to data from the National Securities Depository Ltd (NSDL), FPIs withdrew a net Rs 17,955 crore from Indian equities between December 1-12.

Market experts attributed this sustained outflow to several factors including sharp depreciation of the rupee and rich Indian valuations.

Explaining the outflow, Himanshu Srivastava, Principal Manager Research at Morningstar Investment Research India, said elevated US interest rates, tighter liquidity conditions, and a preference for safer or higher-yielding developed-market assets have weighed on investor sentiment.

Adding to the pressure, India's relatively rich equity valuations have made it less attractive compared to other emerging markets that currently offer better value, he added.

In addition to these concerns, Vaqarjaved Khan, Senior Fundamental Analyst at Angel One, pointed to weakness in the Indian rupee, global portfolio rebalancing, year-end effects, and lingering macroeconomic uncertainty as key reasons behind the continued pullout.

Despite this persistent foreign selling, the impact on markets has been largely offset by strong domestic institutional investor (DII) participation. DIIs invested Rs 39,965 crore during the same period, effectively eclipsing FPI outflows.

FUTURISTIC TREATMENT

The Age of Intelligent healthcare: Philips' B'luru campus takes AI lead

HRITHIK KIRAN BAGADE
BENGALURU, DHNS

You are in the hospital, to rule out a chest condition. You are asked to undergo a cardiac MRI, which typically takes 30-60 minutes, but can extend to 90 minutes, depending on complexity or the need for repeated breath-holds. The scan captures detailed images of the heart, vessels, and lungs, and accurate findings depend on the quality and number of images.

Lying motionless inside a narrow tunnel, holding one's breath repeatedly, while loud beeps blare, can be distressing for many patients. If scan time could be significantly reduced, patient comfort would improve considerably. Philips, the Dutch health technology giant, says it has achieved this through sustained R&D and innovation in artificial intelligence (AI), helping make healthcare faster, more precise and accessible.

Recently, it unveiled a new generation of AI-enabled Cardiac MR (CMR) innovations to accelerate scans and simplify workflows for clinicians. Key breakthroughs include SmartHeart, a one-click automation that plans and sets up all 14 standard and advanced cardiac views in under 30 seconds; SmartSpeed Precise, a Dual AI acceleration technology delivering up to 3x faster imaging and up to 80% sharper images; CINE FreeBreathing, which enables diagnostic-quality imaging without breath-holds; and single-beat acquisition, which captures complete cardiac data in a single heartbeat.

"In a cardiac scan, doctors need 12-13 views of the cardiac anatomy, and it takes 7-8 minutes just for planning. Using an AI algorithm, standard views required for quick diagnosis can be ascertained, and those 7-8 minutes reduce to 30 seconds. This is 'SmartHeart'," the company explains.

Even while pioneering high-end equipment such as MRI, CT, and ultrasound machines, the company evolved into a major healthcare software developer. The Philips Innovation Campus in Bengaluru has been operational for 28 years, and drives 50-80% of the company's global software delivery across its product portfolio.

"In terms of our MRI product, almost 100% of the software-related work happens around Bengaluru. Similar is the case with enterprise informatics — bringing information and data exchange across hospitals and devices," says Arvind Vaishnav, Head of Philips Innovation Campus, Bengaluru, adding that AI is increasingly being integrated across offerings.

The age of Intelligence

AI is rapidly transforming healthcare by improving diagnosis, treatment, and efficiency. Today, AI systems analyse massive volumes of medical data — scans, lab results, and patient records — helping clinicians detect diseases such as cancer, cardiac ailments, and neurological disorders earlier.

AI also plays a growing role in predictive analytics, helping anticipate patient risks, disease outbreaks, and hospital readmissions. In treatment, AI supports personalised medicine by recommending therapies based on genetics, lifestyle, and medical history. Meanwhile, AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants aid with appointment-scheduling, symptom-checking, and patient-monitoring, easing the burden on healthcare staff.

According to Philips' Future Health Index 2025 – India report, AI adoption in Indian healthcare is accelerating rapidly, with the market expected to reach $1.6 billion by year-end. "Indian patients are more likely than their global peers to feel optimistic about healthcare AI (79% versus 59%). Healthcare professionals' optimism is also high at 76%, close to the global average," the report notes.

However, 77% of Indian respondents cite delays in healthcare delivery due to issues such as appointment unavailability. "Close to 30% of all data generated globally originates from healthcare. The challenge is to harness it productively. Hence, AI today also refers to the 'Age of Intelligence'," Vaishnav says.

The sector is also projected to face a shortage of nearly 10 million healthcare workers by 2030. "If AI can automate tasks, the time saved can be used to attend to patients," he adds.

In August, Philips announced Transcend Plus, the next-generation upgrade for its EPIQ CVx and Affiniti CVx cardiovascular ultrasound systems, delivering major advancements in image quality and AI, including FDA-cleared 2D and 3D enhancements and a growing suite of AI-enabled clinical applications, helping cardiology teams handle patient volumes and staffing shortages.

Another area is image augmentation. In complex scans, the human eye may struggle to identify subtle lesions or pathologies. AI helps segregate and highlight critical regions, augmenting clinicians' vision. For tumours, where volume and measurements matter, AI assists doctors and nurses in making faster, more confident decisions under pressure.

AI is also improving agility in hospital workflows. "Hospital data is enormous. If we combine imaging data with enterprise informatics and run an AI algorithm, we can identify disease progression much earlier. Decision-making is no longer dependent on a single modality, but on multiple data sources, enabling more precise treatment plans," Vaishnav explains.

AI – The gate of access

As the world's most populous country, India plays a crucial role in addressing global healthcare challenges and offers a strong testbed for AI solutions, particularly in extending care to the last mile. "The healthcare situation in India is far from being solved, but it's moving in the right direction," says Bharath Sesha, Managing Director, Philips Indian Subcontinent. Elucidating, he adds: "Diagnosis is the starting point. One way is to invest in thousands of scanners. The other is to get more productivity from existing equipment through technology, immediately improving access."

Bharath Sesha

India's health spending currently stands at about 1.9% of GDP, but AI integration can help extend quality healthcare to far more people. "India will be at the forefront of providing AI-enabled access to care," concludes Sesha.

InvITs playing a pivotal role in India's growth story

Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs) have played an instrumental role in democratising access to high-quality infrastructure investments - assets that were once limited to direct ownership or blind-pool private equity participation.

Introduced in India in 2016 under the Indian Trusts Act, 1882, InvITs are SEBI-regulated investment vehicles allowing investors to own a share of income-generating infrastructure assets like highways, power/telecom lines, or renewable energy projects.

They offer the income stability of real assets, while also providing the liquidity, transparency, and regulatory safeguards of listed capital market instruments. Unlike illiquid, capital-intensive physical assets, InvITs are listed on stock exchanges (with unit price ranging between Rs 50 - 200) and can be liquidated easily. InvITs generate returns through two main components:

Regular Distributions: Income earned from user fees/tariffs in InvITs is distributed to the investors, creating a stable and regular income.

Potential for Capital Appreciation: As InvITs do more value-accretive acquisitions, the value of the InvIT portfolio appreciates, leading to higher unit prices and creating long-term capital gains.

Benefits of investing in InvITs

InvITs provide a stable quarterly income flow, paying minimum 90% of net cash flows to unitholders. Investors can diversify their portfolios beyond conventional asset classes, by gaining exposure to multiple infrastructure projects. Moreover, their low correlation with equity markets makes them an effective portfolio hedge during subdued market conditions.

Additionally, infrastructure revenues often have inflation-linked characteristics – toll/tariff rates in InvITs can be indexed to CPI or WPI inflation, and power transmission tariffs are fixed-return (with pass-through of inflation on certain costs), creating an effective inflation hedge. SEBI also ensures that InvITs carry out regular valuations, maintain strong governance standards and transparency making them more trustworthy for investors.

Rise of InvITs in India

India currently has 6 publicly listed InvITs and 21 privately placed ones, collectively managing ₹Rs 7 lakh crore in infrastructure assets. The listed InvITs have a combined market capitalisation of ₹Rs 2.6 lakh crore. Currently, there are InvITs across 9 sectors with roads forming the single largest category of InvITs assets with 40% of AUM, followed by other sectors like power (transmission and generation), optical fiber, telecom towers, and warehousing etc. They have 3.7 lakh unitholders, and have distributed Rs 78,000 crore to investors since the first listing. Current distribution yields (Expected FY26 distribution divided by current unit price) for InvITs range from 9% to 19%.

RAHUL JAIN
HEAD, PUBLIC MARKETS, ALT

Comparison with other asset classes

When compared to traditional asset classes like equities and bonds, instruments like InvITs and REITs offer a compelling hybrid investment, combining both fixed-income and equity features through dividend distributions plus unit price appreciation.

While Indian large-cap equities (Nifty 50 index) have historically delivered 12-13% annualised returns largely from price appreciation (with a modest ₹1.5% dividend yield), InvITs combine stable, high-yield cash flows with moderate capital appreciation. For instance, an investor in IndiGrid InvIT, listed in 2017 at Rs 100, has received around 12-15% annual cash yield, and has seen a capital appreciation of 68%. This totals to 17.2% annualized returns as of December 12, 2025, making them attractive for income-seeking investors.

InvITs offer valuable diversification due to lower volatility and low correlation with equities. The Nifty REIT & InvIT Index's volatility is about two-thirds that of the Nifty 50, with a beta of just 0.22. Like bonds, their prices are sensitive to interest rates, dipping when rates rise and becoming more attractive when rates fall. Historically, returns and risk for the REIT/InvIT index have consistently fit right between equity and debt, positioning them as a balanced, income-generating alternative.

The road ahead

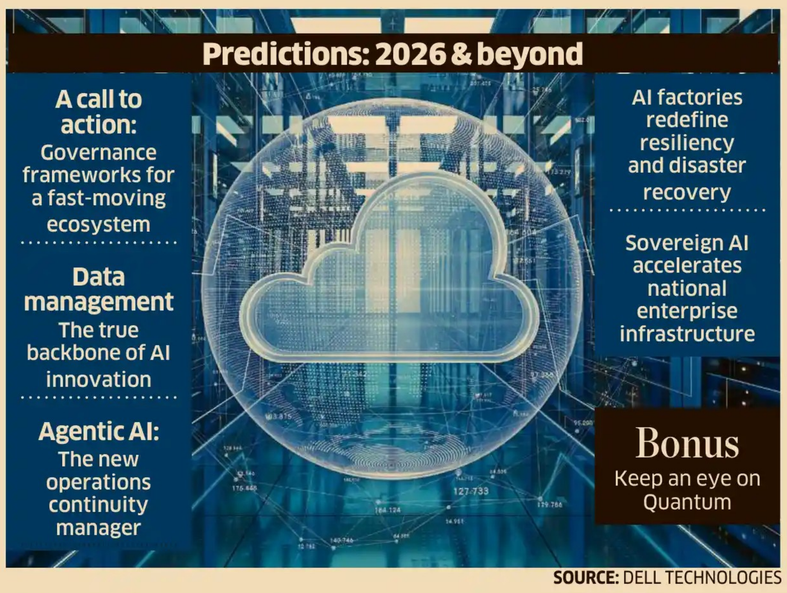
As India's infrastructure sector continues to expand, the demand for high-quality assets is expected to rise, supporting long-term value appreciation. InvITs will continue to reshape how we invest in real infrastructure, truly democratising access to high-quality assets, while offering regular income with the benefits of liquidity and transparency in regulated structures.

Top tech trends to watch in 2026

From governance being redefined to evolution of cloud, tech would traverse greater distances

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

From tech sovereignty to virtualisation and scaled adoption of AI, top tech companies have predicted technology trends in 2026, which will help businesses understand and accelerate Artificial Intelligence (AI) adoption and also drive operational excellence.


Predictions: 2026 & beyond
A call to action: Governance frameworks for a fast-moving ecosystem
Data management The true backbone of AI innovation
Agentic AI: The new operations continuity manager
AI factories redefine resiliency and disaster recovery
Sovereign AI accelerates national enterprise infrastructure
Bonus Keep an eye on Quantum

SOURCE: DELL TECHNOLOGIES

Virtualisation

Pure Storage said the decade-long dominance of proprietary hypervisors will finally fracture. Pure Storage Head of Systems Engineering—India Sudharsan Aravamuthan predicts that virtualisation will no longer be a product; it will be a capability, embedded natively into cloud, container, and edge platforms. Lightweight hypervisors, open-source technologies, and cloud-native orchestration will replace heavyweight virtual machine sprawl. The winners will be those who see this not as an exodus, but as an evolution: moving from managing virtual machines to virtualising the entire stack—compute, storage, networks, and even AI workloads. By 2026, the infrastructure stack will become modular, programmable, and open, said Pure Storage.

Focus on scalability and real adoption

Dell Technologies Global Chief Technology Officer & Chief AI Officer John Roese and APJC President Peter Marrs in their technology trends have included focus on scalability and real adoption of AI. "Conversations are on very real adoption, and AI is creating a truly transformational opportunity," said Marrs. Dell pointed out that Sandisk in Malaysia is a customer that the company is working with to deliver advanced AI solutions for smart manufacturing and product design, achieving up to 95% lights-out factory operation. Roese highlighted that the industry is now entering the autonomous agent era, where agentic AI is evolving from a helpful assistant to an integral manager of complex, long-running processes. "We expect that as people go on the agentic journey into 2026, they will be surprised by how much more agents do for them than they anticipated. Its very presence will bring value to make humans more efficient, and make the non-AI work, work better," he noted.

Sovereign AI and governance

With the acceleration of AI development, there is a degree of volatility. According to Roese, the demand for robust governance frameworks and private, controlled AI environments will become undeniable, urging the industry to build on both internal and external AI guardrails that allow organisations to innovate safely and sustainably. "Last year, we predicted that 'Agentic' would be the word of 2025. This year, the word 'Governance' is going to play a much bigger role," Roese said. Marrs added that sovereign AI is creating a new stream of the AI economy and ecosystem, driving economic transformation in this growing AI economy.

AI is eating software

Software has eaten the world, and now AI is eating software, said Capgemini in its tech trends. It said AI is reshaping the software development lifecycle across industries, shifting from writing code to expressing intent. After years of automation and DevOps-driven acceleration, AI is increasingly generating and maintaining software parts. From now on, developers will specify outcomes while AI generates and maintains components, shortening delivery cycles and improving quality. But governance and oversight remain critical to prevent hallucinations, security gaps, and silent errors. It added that in 2026, organisations will start rebuilding their applications and need to focus on reskilling their software development workforce in the near future. The new currency of expertise will instead lie in systems thinking, AI and agents' orchestration, and managing complex, autonomous process and tool chains.

Cloud 3.0

Capgemini also termed Cloud 3.0 as one of the tech trends. Cloud is entering its next evolution, a phase where hybrid, private, multi-cloud and sovereign architectures are no longer niche, but fundamental to how AI runs at scale, to the point that it is becoming the operational backbone for AI and agentic workloads. "AI cannot scale and get the right performance on classical public cloud alone, pushing adoption of all other models of cloud," it said. While hybrid platforms will become mainstream, organisations will redesign architectures for performance, portability, sovereignty, and strategic autonomy to secure business continuity. Cloud 3.0 will increase the possibilities for organisations to tailor their cloud consumption to their various requirements notably in terms of redundancy of assets, criticality and latency. In the Cloud 3.0 era, organisations will need to ensure they are equipped with the right skills, agile governance and adaptive mindset that enable confident operations across diverse cloud environments, Capgemini said.

Multiagent Systems

Multiagent Systems (MAS) are collections of AI agents that interact to achieve individual or shared complex goals. Gartner said that agents may be delivered in a single environment or developed and deployed independently across distributed environments. "Adopting multiagent systems gives organisations a practical way to automate complex business processes, upskill teams, and create new ways for people and AI agents to work together," said Gartner Distinguished VP Analyst Gene Alvarez.

Preemptive Cybersecurity

Gartner also stressed on preemptive cybersecurity as organisations face an exponential rise in threats targeting networks, data, and connected systems. Gartner forecasts that by 2030, preemptive solutions will account for half of all security spending, as CIOs shift from reactive defence to proactive protection. Preemptive cybersecurity technologies use advanced AI and machine learning (ML) to anticipate and neutralise threats before they materialise.

Weak FII flow, pressure on rupee remain key headwinds

Any formal breakthrough on the India–US trade deal could act as a meaningful catalyst

SIDDHARTHA KHEMKA

This week, while the headline indices (Nifty & Sensex) are expected to trade in a wider range, we expect heightened stock-specific and broader-market volatility. Weak foreign participation and pressure on the rupee remain key headwinds. That said, any formal breakthrough on the India–US trade agreement could act as a meaningful catalyst and help shift sentiment more decisively to the upside. The US Fed has cut rates for the third time, with its latest 25 basis points move lowering global rate expectations and supporting risk appetite, providing a constructive backdrop for Indian equities and flows.

Primary market activity also remains strong, with major mainboard offerings — including ICICI Prudential AMC and Wakefit—set to open this week, collectively aiming to raise nearly Rs 11,900 crore. Key data releases to monitor include India WPI, Manufacturing and Services PMI, US PMI and employment data, UK and EUR CPI, and policy decisions from the BoE, BoJ and ECB.

Last week, the Nifty fell for the second straight week, declining 0.5% amid sharp intraday swings and sustained weakness in the broader markets. Mid-cap and Small-cap indices were down 0.6% and 0.7% respectively, reflecting continued risk-off sentiment. Sectoral performance was largely negative, barring Nifty Metal, which gained 1.8%. On the losing side, Nifty PSU dipped 1.7%, followed by Nifty FMCG, which was down 1.3%.

Global cues remained pivotal as the Fed's rate cut lowered global rate expectations and supported risk appetite after early consolidation. Commodity-linked sectors benefited from firmer international prices. Metals stayed firm through the week as the softer dollar post the Fed cut aided sentiment. Silver hit a fresh record high of $64.31 per ounce on December 11, extending its industrial-led rally. Gold recovered, holding near a seven-week high, while copper stayed elevated on tight supply and expectations of continued fiscal support in China. Domestic liquidity stayed constructive, with equity mutual fund inflows rising 21% month-on-month in November to Rs 29,900 crore, driven by firm earnings, stable growth and benign CPI inflation at 0.7% for the month. Meanwhile, the rupee weakened to a fresh record low of 90.47 against the US dollar as corporate dollar demand and outflows outweighed the softer Fed stance.

Engagement on the India-US trade agreement has gained traction after a prolonged pause. Officials indicated that most pending issues have now been ironed out, with discussions progressing as a US delegation engages in New Delhi to firm up the first tranche of the pact—a development that could turn sentiment if it leads to a formal announcement.

On the policy front, NITI Aayog's recommendations to deepen the corporate bond market—including tax harmonisation and targeted incentives—improved sentiment across financials. The RBI's guidance suggesting a prolonged soft-rate environment reinforced expectations of sustained economic momentum and stable financial conditions.

Sectorally, the life insurance industry delivered its strongest performance in nearly three years, with individual WRP up ₹27% YoY and private players' share rising to ₹75%, aided by GST-led affordability and broader distribution expansion. India's hotel industry posted a strong 1HFY26 with ₹15% YoY revenue and EBITDA growth, led by higher ARR and improving occupancies. The upcoming launch of the Navi Mumbai International Airport on December 25, is set to significantly boost hospitality demand in Navi Mumbai amid limited branded room supply.

(The writer is Head of Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Limited)

Air travel jolt: Long-haul bus bookings rise over 15%

HRITHIK KIRAN BAGADE
BENGALURU, DHNS

The wave of flight cancellations by India's largest airline IndiGo recently, which disrupted travel plans for thousands, has pushed many passengers toward readily available alternative transport options, most notably long-haul intercity buses. The shift is most visible on busy routes that typically see heavy air-travel traffic.

"In light of recent disruptions, many travellers have been looking for alternate modes of transport for urgent, last-minute intercity travel," AbhiBus COO Rohit Sharma told *DH*.

Online bus-ticketing platforms have recorded a sharp uptick of over 15% in seat bookings between December 1-4 and 5-8. redBus, in particular, is witnessing a 17% rise in bus seats booked. "We are seeing the highest impact on major bus routes that connect large metros, such as Pune-Hyderabad, Mumbai-Hyderabad, and Mumbai-Bengaluru. On over 70 such routes, we are seeing a 30%+ increase in seat bookings," a redBus spokesperson said.

Routes showing the strongest surge include Hyderabad-Mumbai-Hyderabad, Mumbai-Hyderabad-Mumbai, Chennai-Hyderabad-Chennai, Ahmedabad-Mumbai, Nagpur-Mumbai, Ahmedabad-Pune, and Visakhapatnam-Hyderabad. Journeys beginning or ending in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana are also seeing elevated demand. "redBus has also seen a 36% increase in search volume traffic for major metro hub routes," the spokesperson added.

AbhiBus' Sharma noted, "During this period, we've seen bus bookings increase by 10-15% across major routes. High-demand routes for this month include Pune-Hyderabad, Lucknow-Delhi, Bengaluru-Chennai, Bengaluru-Hyderabad, Hyderabad-Mumbai, and Hyderabad-Bengaluru."

Reports also emerged of steep fare hikes on some private buses due to the sudden jump in demand from displaced air travellers. This has required operators to adjust schedules and add more vehicles. redBus clarified that it neither manages operations nor sets fares. "However, we have witnessed around an 18% increase in inventory addition on the redBus platform for the said routes... We are also seeing some surge in response to the increased demand; on average, there is a 25% growth in ASP (Average Selling Price) for these routes," the spokesperson said.

According to redBus' latest BusTrack report, India's intercity bus segment carried 140 million passengers between April and September 2025, raking in gross ticketing value of Rs 13,216 crore, with sleeper bus demand dominating bookings at 51%.

Platforms noted that some growth in bookings aligns with seasonal trends linked to weddings, pilgrimages and holidays. But since the last several days, the spike, especially on metro-connecting routes, has been noticeably sharper.

"In the middle of the high season for travel just prior to the Christmas-New Year break, it is unfortunate that we have a situation where there will be a capacity shortfall on demand resulting in further increase in airfares. This shortfall is hard to be filled by the other airlines in a short span, and we are already seeing signs of passengers switching back to train and bus," Ixigo Co-Founder and Group CEO Aloke Bajpai said.

Recently, Indian Railways also had deployed 89 special train services to manage the surge caused by winter travel, flight disruptions, and increased demand on key corridors.

DH TECH REVIEW

Nothing Phone (3a) Lite: A reliable mid-range with stylish design

ROHIT KVN
BENGALURU, DHNS

London-based Nothing Inc. recently launched the Phone (3a) Lite series in India. It is available in two variants-- 8GB RAM+128GB storage, and 8GB RAM+256GB storage-- for Rs 20,999 and Rs 22,999, respectively.

Design, Build, and Display

The new Phone (3a) Lite keeps Nothing's distinctive aesthetics. It sports a transparent back panel with a toned-down Glyph interface—LED light at the base that flashes during calls, messages, or timers.

The triple-camera array at the top maintains the asymmetrical layout we see on the premium Phone 3.

The mobile comes in black, white, and blue colours. On the sides, it sports a sturdy polycarbonate frame and matte finish. It offers a comfortable grip to hold the handset.

The device is protected by Panda Glass on both sides and comes with a pre-applied screen guard and a transparent silicone case.

It carries an IP54 rating, meaning it can survive accidental water splashes.

A highlight feature of Phone (3a) Lite is the Essential Key, located below the power button. It opens Essential Space for quick notes, screenshots with audio reminders, and AI-generated suggestions. However, its position is slightly inconvenient, as fingers often mistakenly press it instead of the power button.

Processor: MediaTek Dimensity 7300 Pro
Battery: 5,000mAh
Colours: Black, Blue and White
Camera: 50MP(Main) + 8MP ultrawide + 2MP macro sensor with LED flash
Price starts at Rs 20,999

On the front, it flaunts a 6.77-inch full HD+(1080 x 2392p) AMOLED display with a 120Hz adaptive refresh rate. It comes with pixel density of 387 ppi (pixels per inch), good enough to read messages or read news articles in the outdoors without having to squint the eyes. But, for binge-watching on OTT apps, it is best experienced indoors without any reflection issues

Performance and Software

The phone runs on the 4nm MediaTek Dimensity 7300 Pro chipset paired with 8GB LPDDR4X RAM and 128GB/256GB UFS 2.2 storage, expandable up to 2TB. It comfortably handles daily tasks, OTT streaming, social apps, and even generative AI apps like Gemini and ChatGPT. It supports popular battle royale games available on Google Play Store.

The device ships with Android 15-based Nothing OS 3.5. It supports a minimalist, monochrome look with dot-matrix icons. Aside from a few pre-installed apps, it delivers a clean, near-stock Android experience.

With a 5,000mAh battery, it can easily last full day under normal usage. The device supports 33W wired charger.

Photography

It houses a triple-camera module featuring a 50MP main sensor (f/1.88, EIS), an 8MP ultra-wide, and a 2MP macro camera with LED flash.

With natural sun light conditions, the subjects particularly colourful flowers, pets and human faces appear vibrant.

While macro mode captures fine details in close ranges, it also excels in portrait modes with sharp focus on subjects and natural bokeh effects in the background.

At night mode, the photos appear sharp with minimal noise. The 16MP front camera takes good selfies in natural light. While the primary camera supports 4K video at 30 frames per second, the front camera can record 1080p full HD video at 60fps.

Verdict

With a standout design, practical Essential Key feature, clean software, and capable cameras, Nothing Phone (3a) Lite is a solid mid-range device choice for those who want a unique handset without overspending.

TOP PICKS

The data is sourced from Motilal Oswal Financial Services Limited

SBI Life (ID: SBILIFE)	Upside **+10%****	Last close ₹2,030	BUY Target: ₹2,240*
RBL (ID: RBLBANK)	Upside **+14%****	Last close ₹307	BUY Target: ₹350*
M&M (ID: M&M)	Upside **+17%****	Last close ₹3,670	BUY Target: ₹4,275*
Safari Industries (ID: SAFARI)	Upside **+17%****	Last close ₹2,300	BUY Target: ₹2,700*
Sagility India (ID: SAGILITY)	Upside **+26%****	Last close ₹50	BUY Target: ₹63*

* Target price has been calculated on the basis of fundamentals ** Upside refers to more value stock is expected to generate than its current price

BJP's Kuki MLAs return to party activities

Move seen as breakthrough in talks to restore 'popular' govt

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

ON THE MEND?

- 4 out of 7 BJP MLAs belonging to Kuki-Zo communities on Sunday joined its legislature party meeting in New Delhi
- This was the first time they participated in any party activity since the Manipur conflict began in May 2023
- Meanwhile, Kuki insurgent groups demand separate Union Territory in talks with Central govt

In what was seen as a breakthrough in the restoration of government in conflict-torn Manipur, four out of seven BJP MLAs belonging to Kuki-Zo communities on Sunday joined the party's legislature party meeting in New Delhi for the first time since the Meitei-Kuki conflict erupted in May 2023.

Manipur has remained under President's Rule since February after BJP MLAs failed to find a consensus candidate to replace then-chief minister N Biren Singh.

Sunday's meeting was convened following repeated requests by BJP legislators belonging to the Meitei community for the restoration of the "popular" government.

The BJP has 37 MLAs in the 60-member Manipur Assembly, but seven of its legislators representing the Kuki-Zo communities have stayed away from state capital Imphal and their Valley-based colleagues.

On Sunday, however, four of them — Nemcha Kipgen, Lelzamang Haokip, L M Khoute, and Ngursanglur Hmar — not only sat across the Meitei legislators but also stood together for a group photo after the meeting.

The BJP's Meitei legislators can form the government with the support of the NPF and Independents, but the party is pushing for Kuki MLAs to rejoin the government as part of efforts to restore peace, a source said.

However, the choice of the new chief minister remains undecided.

Meanwhile, Kuki insurgent groups currently under the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement in Manipur have told the central government that "reintegration under the existing state administrative framework" was "no longer possible", and that a "separate political solution" in the form of a Union Territory with legislature was the only solution to their ongoing conflict with Meiteis.

Labour on the move: Kashmir's nomadic mothers at risk

Tradition, courage and sheer luck define the experience of giving birth in high meadows

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

Life along the migration path is unforgiving. AFP FILE

MIGRATION TRAILS

- Pregnant women endure perilous treks with heavy loads and little food
- Labour begins miles from hospitals, leaving families and midwives to intervene
- Babies are born under trees and riverbanks, with mothers walking or riding for days
- Midwives are lifelines, but many mothers die unseen in the hills
- Healthcare outreach is poor; mobile units rarely reach high pastures

High in the Pir Panjal mountains, the air is thin, the terrain rugged and the journey long.

For the nomadic Gujjar and Bakarwal communities, the biennial migration from the lowlands of Rajouri and Poonch to the high pastures of the Kashmir Valley is a way of life—but for pregnant women, it is a perilous ordeal.

Carrying heavy loads, enduring long hours on foot or horseback, often without enough food or water, many go into labour far from the nearest hospital, relying only on family members or elderly midwives. Some survive against the odds; others die quietly along the forested trails.

Twenty-four-year-old Rabia, in the final weeks of her pregnancy, felt labour pains halfway through the spring trek. With no clinic in sight, she was attended only by her mother and Nargis, a midwife who had delivered dozens of babies along the migration route. Hours later, Rabia gave birth beside a small tent pitched near a forest stream. Weak and bleeding, she had no choice but to continue the arduous journey on horseback, her newborn tied carefully to her side.

Life along the migration path is unforgiving. Babies are born beneath trees, by riverbanks, or in makeshift shelters, often on wet or uneven ground. Pregnant women carry supplies, water and even their younger children while walking or riding long distances. Many go days without a proper meal.

Early marriage and malnutrition increase the risks. Farah, married at 16, recalls giving birth at 17 after weeks on minimal rations; by the time she reached the nearest hospital, she was severely anaemic and required urgent medical intervention.

Traditional midwives like Nargis are the community's lifeline. "Sometimes there is so much blood loss or infection that we cannot save the mother," she says, recalling women who died high in the hills because the nearest hospital was too far, or food and water were exhausted.

Most deaths go unrecorded, as official statistics only reflect hospital deliveries.

Healthcare outreach is limited and sporadic. Mobile units and government promises often fail to reach these high pastures due to the challenging terrain, limited staffing and insufficient funding.

Doctors familiar with these migration routes say the risks are enormous. "Many women begin labour miles from any health facility. By the time they reach the hospital, they are often exhausted, severely anaemic or suffering from complications that could have been prevented with timely care," says Dr Mushtaq, a public health specialist who has accompanied health teams on the way to these high pastures.

Globally, pastoralist women face similar challenges. Mobile clinics in Mongolia, Ethiopia and Somalia provide antenatal care, immunisation, nutrition services and emergency support to women far from conventional healthcare.

For Gujjar and Bakarwal women, giving birth is a mixture of courage and sheer luck. "In these mountains, what else can they rely on, if not an old woman's hands?" asks Nargis, folding her blankets after another delivery.

Sex assault survivor speaks out after actor's acquittal

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

'NOT EVERYONE EQUAL BEFORE LAW'

- 'Not every citizen is equal before the law,' survivor writes in social media post
- Says she sensed irregularities since 2020, request for open-court proceedings denied
- Dileep's ex-wife Manju Warrier says conspirators still walk free in broad daylight
- Trial court cites lack of evidence against Dileep

The South Indian actor who survived a sexual assault in Kochi in 2017 has spoken out, lamenting that her plea for a fair trial was denied and that even the memory card containing videos of the assault was illegally accessed.

"After years of pain, tears and emotional struggle, I have come to a painful realisation. Not every citizen in this country is treated equally before the law," she wrote in a social media post on Sunday.

Actor Dileep's ex-wife Manju Warrier also broke her silence, posting on social media that the conspirators continue to remain in plain sight.

Dileep and three others were recently acquitted of conspiracy charges in the case, while six were convicted.

The survivor recalled that from 2020, she began to sense irregularities and even approached the high court and Supreme Court, saying that she had lost trust in the trial process. Her plea to transfer the case away from the same judge was dismissed.

While expressing gratitude that six accused were convicted, the actor said her fundamental rights were not protected. She said that the memory card containing video evidence of the crime was illegally accessed, and her request to hold proceedings in open court was denied.

Manju, who had earlier alleged conspiracy in the case, said it was frightening that those who plotted the crime, "whoever they may be", continue to walk free in broad daylight. "The survivor will get justice only when the conspirators are also convicted. It is equally important to strengthen society's confidence in the police and the criminal justice system," Manju said.

The trial court order that convicted six accused and acquitted Dileep and three others cited multiple flaws in the evidence presented to establish Dileep's role in the conspiracy.

"The prosecution miserably failed to prove the conspiracy between accused No.1 (Pulsar Suni) and accused No.8 (Dileep)," the court held. It also rejected the prosecution's claim that the accused had been planning the assault on Dileep's instructions since 2013, noting that the allegation was not supported by reliable evidence.

It ruled out the claim that Suni attempted to sexually assault the victim in Goa in January 2017, stating that witness statements showed no such misconduct when he served as the driver of the vehicle used by the actress there.

The prosecution has announced that it will file an appeal against the verdict following its review of the 1,700-page judgment.

(*With PTI inputs*)

Parl panel seeks UGC approval for Wangchuk's institute

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Himalayan Institute of Alternatives (HIAL), founded by Ladakh educator and activist Sonam Wangchuk, is doing "exemplary" work and should be granted recognition by the University Grants Commission, a Parliamentary panel has noted.

In its report tabled in Parliament, the committee headed by Congress MP Digvijaya Singh expressed its concern over the pending recognition of HIAL by UGC.

The panel also recommended that the Ministry of Education closely study the HIAL model and consider how it can be replicated elsewhere through Centres of Innovation in Education or other interventions.

"During its study visit to Ladakh, the committee was impressed with the academic, research, and entrepreneurship ecosystem at the Himalayan Institute of Alternatives, Ladakh (HIAL), especially its success in implementing experiential education and learning rooted in local socio-cultural and ecological contexts," said the report of the Standing Committee on Education, Women, Youth and Sports.

"The committee observed that HIAL has achieved a tremendous impact on the local community and received international fame through its ice stupas and other community engagement activities," it added.

Wangchuk was detained under the stringent NSA on September 26, two days after violent protests demanding statehood and Sixth Schedule status for Ladakh left four people dead and 90 injured. The government had accused him of inciting the violence.

WORLD

Netanyahu accuses Oz PM of fuelling antisemitism

JERUSALEM, REUTERS: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu condemned Sunday's shooting at a Jewish holiday celebration in Sydney and said he had warned his Australian counterpart that the country's support for Palestinian statehood would fuel antisemitism.

Gunmen opened fire during an event marking Hanukkah at Sydney's Bondi Beach, killing at 11 people. Netanyahu said the shooting was "cold blooded murder".

He added that in August he had told Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in a letter that the Australian government's policies were promoting antisemitism in Australia. "I wrote: 'Your call for a Palestinian state pours fuel on the antisemitic fire. It rewards Hamas terrorists. It emboldens those who menace Australian Jews and encourages the Jew hatred now stalking your streets'," Netanyahu said in a speech.

US university campus shooting kills two

Suspect who fired over 40 rounds of ammunition arrested

PROVIDENCE, AP/PTI

Evacuated Brown University students arrive at a temporary family reunification site at the Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, on Sunday. AFP

Police in Rhode Island said early Sunday that they had a person of interest in custody after a shooting rocked the Brown University campus during final exams, leaving two people dead and nine others wounded.

Providence Police Chief Col Oscar Perez confirmed at a news conference that the detained person is in their 30s and that authorities are not currently searching for anyone else. He declined to say where the individual was arrested or whether the person has any connection to the university.

The shooting erupted on Saturday afternoon in the engineering building of the Ivy League school in Providence during final exams. Hundreds of police officers scoured the Brown University campus and nearby neighbourhoods, reviewing surveillance footage as they searched for the shooter, who opened fire in a classroom.

Armed with a handgun, the shooter fired more than 40 rounds of 9mm ammunition, according to a law enforcement official. As of Sunday morning, authorities had not recovered the weapon but did find two loaded 30-round magazines, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to discuss the investigation publicly.

Providence officials warned of a heightened police presence on Sunday. Many local businesses announced they would remain closed, expressing shock and heartbreak over the violence. "Everybody is reeling, and we have a lot of recovery ahead of us," Brown University President Christina Paxson said. "Our community is strong and we will get through this, but it is devastating."

Surveillance footage released by police showed a suspect dressed in black calmly walking away from the scene.

The manhunt paralysed the campus, nearby residential neighbourhoods and parts of downtown Providence until a shelter-in-place order was lifted early Sunday.

Zelenskyy offers to drop Nato bid for security guarantees

BERLIN, AP/PTI: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Sunday voiced readiness to drop his country's bid to join NATO in exchange for Western security guarantees, but rejected the US push for ceding territory to Russia as he arrived in Berlin for talks with US envoys on ending the war.

Zelenskyy arrived at the Chancellery ahead of the expected talks with US President Donald Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner, part of a series of meetings in Berlin between Ukrainian, US and European officials.

Responding to journalists' questions in audio clips on a WhatsApp group chat before the talks, Zelenskyy said that since the US and some European nations had rejected Ukraine's push to join Nato, Kyiv expects the West to offer a set of guarantees similar to those offered to the alliance members.

"These security guarantees are an opportunity to prevent another wave of Russian aggression," he said. "And this is already a compromise on our part."

Zelenskyy emphasised that any security assurances would need to be legally binding and supported by the US Congress, adding that he expected an update from his team following a meeting between Ukrainian and US military officials.

He said that he will meet separately with German Chancellor Friedrich Merz and, possibly, other European leaders later in the evening. Washington has tried for months to navigate the demands of each side as Trump presses for a swift end to Russia's war and grows increasingly exasperated by delays.

WORLD AT A GLANCE

Actor Jack Black attends a premiere for the film 'Anaconda' in Los Angeles on Saturday. REUTERS

B'desh govt summons Indian envoy over Hasina's remarks

▶ Bangladesh's Foreign Ministry on Sunday summoned Indian High Commissioner Pranay Verma to express its "serious concern" over the "incendiary statements" made by deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, who is currently in India, PTI reports from Dhaka.

Hasina, 78, fled to India in August last year after her Awami League government was toppled in a violent student-led street protest. Bangladesh has been demanding her extradition. "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned the Indian High Commissioner today to convey the Government of Bangladesh's serious concern to the Government of India for allowing fugitive Sheikh Hasina to continue to make incendiary statements calling upon her supporters to engage in terrorist activities in Bangladesh, aiming to thwart the upcoming parliamentary elections," the foreign office said.

Restored pharaoh statues revealed

▶ Egypt on Sunday revealed the revamp of two colossal statues of a prominent pharaoh in the southern city of Luxor, the latest in the government's archaeological events that aim at drawing more tourists to the country, AP/PTI reports from Luxor (Egypt).

The giant alabaster statues, known as the Colossi of Memnon, were reassembled in a renovation project that lasted about two decades. They represent Amenhotep III, who ruled ancient Egypt about 3,400 years ago. "Today we are celebrating, actually, the finishing and the erecting of these two colossal statues," Mohamed Ismail, secretary-general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, said ahead of the ceremony. Ismail said the colossi are of great significance to Luxor, a city known for its ancient temples and other antiquities.

US to begin social media screening of H-1B visa applicants from today

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON, PTI

The Trump administration will begin enhanced screening and vetting of H-1B and dependent H-4 visa applicants from Monday, including checks of their social media profiles.

The State Department said that from December 15, a review of the online presence of all H-1B applicants and their dependants will be conducted.

Students and exchange visitors were already subject to such reviews, and the department has now expanded the requirement to include H-1B applicants and their dependants on H-4 visas. "To facilitate this vetting, all applicants for H-1B and their dependants (H-4), F, M and J non-immigrant visas are instructed to adjust the privacy settings on all of their social media profiles to 'public'," the State Department said.

The F, M and J visas are used by students and exchange visitors to enter the US. Several H-1B visa applicants have had their interviews in India rescheduled following the new guidelines on social media vetting.

Underscoring that a US visa is a privilege and not a right, the State Department said it uses all available information in visa screening. "We conduct thorough vetting of all visa applicants, including online presence reviews of student and exchange visitor applicants in the F, M and J non-immigrant categories," it said, stressing that every visa adjudication is a national security decision.

Hong Kong's pro-democracy party votes to disband

HONG KONG, AP/PTI: Hong Kong's biggest pro-democracy party voted Sunday to dissolve after more than 30 years of activism, marking the end of an era of the Chinese semiautonomous city's once-diverse political landscape.

Democratic Party chairperson Lo Kin-hei said the political environment was "one important point" among the factors they considered, and about 97% of members' ballots were in support of its liquidation. He said it is the best way forward for its members.

"Yet as the times have shifted, we now, with deep regret, must bring this chapter to a close," he said. Party veterans had earlier said some members were warned of consequences if the party didn't shut down.

Its demise reflects the dwindling freedoms promised to the former British colony when it returned to China's rule in 1997. China imposed a national security law in June 2020, following massive anti-government protests the year before, saying it was necessary for the city's stability. Under the law, many leading activists, including the Democratic Party's former chairs Albert Ho and others were arrested.

Hemanth's ton guides AP to thrilling win

PUNE, PTI: Young Andhra batter Hemanth Reddy proved way too strong-willed in the face of some hostile bowling from Punjab as he smashed an unbeaten 109 to lead his side to a thrilling five-wicket win in a high-scoring Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy Super League A match, here Sunday.

Reddy, playing only his second SMAT game, saw the entire Andhra top and middle order being wiped out and leaving them perilously close to defeat at 56 for 5 while chasing 206 for victory. But the 23-year-old came up with his career-best performance, blazing to a 53-ball 109 as Andhra reached 211/5 on the penultimate ball of the match.

Captain Kishan's knock

India keeper-batter Ishan Kishan smashed a 30-ball 63 as Jharkhand eked out a thrilling one-run win against Madhya Pradesh to earn four points to take their tally to eight.

Brief scores: Super League Group A:
Haryana: 234/3 in 20 overs (Arsh Ranga 26, Ankit Kumar 89, Nishant Sindhu 63, Samant Jakhar 31; Sairaj Patil 2-44) lt to Mumbai: 238/6 in 17.3 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 101, Sarfaraz Khan 64; Samant Jakhar 2-42).
Rajasthan: 178/9 in 20 overs (Mahipal Lomror 48, KS Rathore 27, Kamlesh Nagarkoti 29; Mohammed Siraj 2-23, CV Milind 3-25, Tanay Thyagarajan 3-38) lt to Hyderabad 179/4 in 17.1 overs (Tanmay Agarwal 73, Buddhi Rahul 55; Kamlesh Nagarkoti 2-35, Manav Suthar 2-20).
Super League Group B: Punjab:205/5 in 20 overs (Harnoor Singh 42, Anmolpreet Singh 47, Salil Arora 42, Ramandeep Singh 43) lt to Andhra 211/5 in 19.5 overs (M Hemanth Reddy 109, SDNV Prasad 53; Gurnoor Brar 3-23).
Jharkhand: 181/9 in 20 overs (Ishan Kishan 63, Anukul Roy 29; Tripuresh Singh 2-36, Venkatesh Iyer 3-17) bt Madhya Pradesh: 180/4 in 20 overs (Harsh Gawali 61, Harpreet Singh Bhatia 77 n.o.).

Shane Chandaria

Chandaria is youngest F4 champion

BENGALURU, DHNS: Kenya-born Shane Chandaria (15) became the youngest driver to win the Formula 4 Indian Championship on the final day of the Indian Racing Festival at the Madras International Circuit in Chennai on Sunday.

Having entered the 2025 season as a fresh-faced rookie, the Indian-origin driver, nicknamed 'Baby Samurai', finished the event as the indisputable champion as his team The Chennai Turbo Riders carried a 24-point lead at the top going into the fifth and final round this weekend.

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

U-19 Asia Cup: Afghanistan vs Sri Lanka, Bangladesh vs Nepal (both 10:30 am). **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network & SonyLIV.**

FOOTBALL

EPL: Manchester United vs Bournemouth (**1:30 am, Tuesday**). **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network.**

La Liga: Rayo Vallecano vs Real Betis (**1:30 am, Tuesday**). **LIVE** on **FanCode.**

CRICKET THIRD T20I

Arshdeep, Harshit wreak havoc

Pacers help India beat South Africa to take 2-1 series lead

India's Arshdeep Singh (left) celebrates with Harshit Rana after taking the wicket of South Africa's Reeza Hendricks during their win in the third T20I at the HPCA Stadium in Dharamsala on Sunday. PTI

DHARAMSALA, PTI

Abhishek Sharma played a sparkling little innings after the pacers produced a riveting exhibition of swing bowling, powering India to a smooth seven-wicket victory in the third T20I here on Sunday.

Chasing a modest 118 for a 2-1 lead in the five-match series, vice-captain Gill (28, 28 balls) and his opening partner Abhishek (35, 18 balls) added 60 runs in 5.2 overs as India achieved their target without much effort in 15.5 overs.

The lone point of interest in India's chase was whether the South African pacers could emulate their Indian counterparts with the new ball, and make the opponents' task tougher.

However, Abhishek and Gill never allowed the South African bowlers to settle, as the former carted Lungi Ngidi for 16 runs in the first over.

In fact, the very first ball of the chase went for a six -- an early indicator of the Indian openers' intention.

In the second over, Gill too joined his partner to garner 16 runs as India sped to 32 for no loss in the initial two overs.

Abhishek, as is his wont, batted in a single gear and it required a gem of a catch by Aiden Markram in the deep off Corbin Bosch to snap his stay.

Once the left-hander was dismissed, India's chase of the remaining 58 runs settled into a much more sedate rhythm as Gill, who was saved by a DRS call early in his innings, and Tilak Varma (26 not out) did not look for any adventure.

Gill's run-a-ball 28 will certainly not rank among his fluent ones, but it might have boosted his confidence after two lukewarm outings in the first two matches of the series.

He eventually dragged a Marco Jansen delivery back on to his stumps, and skipper Suryakumar Yadav too failed to remain till the end. But those were the minor aberrations on the night.

All the credit for this canter should go to India's pacers, who produced a mesmerizing spell of swing bowling to bundle out South Africa for a below-par 117.

Leading India's show with early wickets were Arshdeep Singh (2/13), Harshit Rana (2/34) and Hardik Pandya (1/23) after the hosts chose to bowl.

Skipper Markram offered a tiny spark for South Africa with a spirited 46-ball 61.

Undoubtedly, the brightest stars under a cool sky were India's quick bowlers, who procured lethal swing and lateral movement with the new ball.

It had its effect on the low-key power play effort of South Africa -- 25 for three -- and the phase contained just two fours.

Arshdeep, who had a horror outing at Mullanpur a couple of days back, redeemed himself with a dream first spell (3-0-9-1).

He bowled three deliveries which angled away from Reeza Hendricks and then jagged one back to trap the South African opener leg before with the help of DRS.

Rana did precisely the same to Quinton de Kock, a nip-backer, trapping the frozen-legged left-hander inside the crease.

Dewald Brevis was slightly unfortunate to get castled while attempting a release shot off a wide delivery from Rana.

South Africa suddenly found themselves at 7 for 3 in 3.1 overs, and it was always going to be an uphill climb for them from there.

Markram crunched a couple of sweet drives in between to keep the board moving but Tristan Stubbs and Bosch departed in quick succession to further derail South African innings.

Stubbs' wicket helped all-rounder Pandya to complete 100 wickets in T20Is, the third Indian bowler to do so after Arshdeep and Jasprit Bumrah, who did not play this match after returning home to attend to a personal situation.

The BCCI said his availability for the remainder of the series will be announced in due course. Kuldeep Yadav too came into the eleven for an unwell Axar Patel.

SCOREBOARD

SOUTH AFRICA

De Kock lbw Harshit	1
Hendricks lbw Arshdeep	0
Markram c Jitesh b Arshdeep	61
Brevis b Harshit	2
Stubbs c Jitesh b Hardik	9
Bosch b Dube	4
Ferreira c Chakravarthy	20
Jansen b Chakravarthy	2
Nortje st Jitesh b Kuldeep	12
Ngidi (not out)	2
Baartman c Surya b Kuldeep	1
Extras (B-1, LB-2)	3
Total: (all out, 20 overs)	**117**

Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-1, 3-7, 4-30, 5-44, 6-69, 7-77, 8-113, 9-115.
Bowling: Arshdeep 4-0-13-2, Harshit 4-0-34-2, Hardik 3-0-23-1, Chakravarthy 4-0-11-2, Dube 3-0-21-1, Kuldeep 2-0-12-2.

INDIA

Abhishek c Markram b Bosch	35
Gill b Jansen	28
Tilak (not out)	26
Suryakumar c Baartman b Ngidi	12
Dube (not out)	10
Extras (LB-7, W-2)	9
Total (for 3 wkts, 15.5 overs)	**120**

Fall of wickets: 1-60, 2-92, 3-109
Bowling: Lungi Ngidi 3-0-23-1, Marco Jansen 3-0-24-1, Ottneil Baartman 3.5-0-34-0, Corbin Bosch 3-0-18-1, Anrich Nortje 3-0-14-0.
Result: India won by 7 wkts.
5-match T20I series: India lead 2-1.
PoM: Arshdeep Singh.
Next match: Lucknow (Dec 17).

Green blames manager 'stuff up' for auction listing error

ADELAIDE, PTI: Australia all-rounder Cameron Green on Sunday clarified that he will be available to bowl in the IPL saying a "stuff-up" by his manager led to him being mistakenly registered as a batter for next week's mini auction.

The 26-year-old, who missed the 2025 IPL season, recovering from back surgery, returned to international cricket as a specialist batter in June. However, he has since been cleared to bowl and has been rolling his arm in the ongoing Ashes series between Australia and England.

"I'll be good to bowl. I don't know if my manager would like to hear this, but there was a stuff-up on his end," Green said.

"He didn't mean to say 'batter'. I think he accidentally selected the wrong box. It was pretty funny how it's all played out, but it was actually a stuff-up on his end.

The lanky all-rounder, who previously represented Mumbai Indians in 2023 and Royal Challengers Bengaluru in 2024, is among the biggest names in the auction and is likely to be in the highest demand.

Green has entered the auction with a base price of Rs two crore. He has been listed under the batters' category instead of the all-rounders' lot.

Cameron Green

India cruise past Pakistan

All-rounder Kaniskh, seamer Deepesh star in thumping 90-run win in U-19 Asia Cup

Indian players celebrate the fall of a Pakistani wicket in their in their group stage win at the U-19 Asia Cup in Dubai. ACC

DUBAI, PTI

A disciplined bowling performance, led by all-rounder Kanishk Chouhan and seamer Deepesh Devendran, powered India to a comprehensive 90-run victory over Pakistan in their Group A match of the U-19 Asia Cup here Sunday.

After being put in to bat, India posted a competitive 240 all out in 46.1 overs, riding on a fluent 85 from Aaron George and useful contributions from captain Ayush Mhatre (38) and Chouhan (46).

Pakistan were then bundled out for 150 in 41.2 overs, never quite recovering from the early setbacks in a chase of 241.

India got off to a brisk start with skipper Mhatre striking four boundaries and three sixes during his 25-ball knock before Mohammad Sayyam removed both openers inside the first 10 overs.

George then held the innings together that helped India cross the 230-run mark despite losing wickets regularly.

For Pakistan, Sayyam (3/67) and Abdul Subhan (3/42) were the standout bowlers, while Niqab Shafiq took two wickets.

Captain Farhan Yousaf (23) and Huzaifa Ahsan attempted to steady the innings, but Chouhan's incisive off-spin broke the resistance. Ahsan top-scored for Pakistan with 70 off 83 balls, but lacked support at the other end.

Chouhan finished with 3 for 33, while Devendran returned figures of 3 for 16.

Handshakes avoided

The players of the two teams did not shake hands with each other at the toss and after the match, continuing the 'no-handshake' protocol observed by the Indian men's team during the recently concluded Asia Cup 2025, where they refused to receive the winner's trophy from PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi.

Brief scores: India: 240 all out in 46.1 overs (Ayush Mhatre 38, Aaron George 85, Kanishk Chouhan 46; Mohammad Sayyam 3-67, Abdul Subhan 3-42, Niqab Shafiq 2-38) bt Pakistan: 150 all out in 41.2 overs (Huzaifa Ahsan 70; Kishan Kumar Singh 2-33, Kanishk Chouhan 3-33, Deepesh Devendran 3-16).

Karnataka settle for a draw

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka remained winless in the elite group stages of the Vijay Merchant Trophy as the U-16 side settled for a draw against table toppers Uttarakhand on the third and final day of the match in Bhilai, Chhattisgarh on Sunday.

Anaya Negi scored a defiant 131 to take the match away from Karnataka, who were defending a target of 338, as Uttarakhand ended the day on 249/6 in 74 overs. Atharv Deshpande 4/62 troubled the Uttarakhand top-order but Negi found help in Kushagra Koranga (57) from the other end to avoid any late collapse.

Earlier in the morning, Karnataka, resuming at 83/1, scored a quick 117 runs in 17 overs before declaring at 200/3. Half-centuries from Rohith M (56) and Arush Jain (59) helped Karnataka set up a target of 338.

Karnataka, who picked up three points through a first-innings lead earlier, remain among the bottom two of Group D with six points.

Brief scores: Karnataka: 287 all out & (O/n: 83/1): 200/6 in 39 overs (Rohith M 56, Arush Jain 59, Sukurth J 39; Abhimanyu 3-56) drew with Uttarakhand: 150 all & 249/6 in 74 overs (Anaya Negi 131, Kushagra Koranga 57, Rakesh 33; Atharv Deshpande 4-62).

Mugesh, Shriya shine in Celebration 10k run

BENGALURU, DHNS: Mugesh MU and Shriya Ganiger emerged victorious in the men's and women's open categories of the 10km race at the 12th edition of the Thump! Celebration Bengaluru Half Marathon and 10K here on Sunday.

Mugesh clocked 42 minutes 57 seconds to win the men's race while Shriya topped the women's field with a timing of 57 minutes 46 seconds.

The 10km race, the third event of the morning, was flagged off at 6.15 am by the Deccan Herald and Prajavani team with a customised flag. More than 1,500 runners competed across open, senior and veteran categories, making it one of the most keenly contested segments of the day.

Earlier, the Thump! 20 Miler, which began at 5.30 am, saw Sathvik S win the men's open category with a time of 2 hours 15 minutes 02 seconds, while Lattika Arvind claimed the women's open title in 3 hours 5 minutes 58 seconds.

The half marathon was won by Ozas Sahu in the men's open category in 1 hour 25 minutes 24 seconds. Sapna Agarwal topped the women's open half marathon, finishing in 1 hour 59 minutes 12 seconds.

More than 4,500 participants took part in the 12th edition of the event, organised by Life is Calling Sports Management Limited in association with the NICE Corridor.

Over 4500 people across various categories participated in Thump! Celebration Bangalore Half Marathon and 10K at NICE Tollgate, Hosakerehalli in Bengaluru on Sunday.
DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

Railways grapplers clinch team title

AHMEDABAD, PTI: Railways Sports Promotion Board (RSPB) overcame a stiff challenge from Services to clinch the Greco-Roman team title in the Senior National Wrestling Championships here on Sunday.

Both RSPB and and Services Sports Control Board (SSCB) finished with 190 points each but the former were declared winners, while Haryana, with 138 points, came third.

Railways' Chetan won the 63kg gold beating Haryana's Sunny Kumar with Umesh (delhi) and Gyanendra (SSCB) taking the bronze.

Results: Men: 55kg: Lalit (SSCB) 1, Vishvajeet (Mah) 2, Sharvan (RSPB) & Neeraj Patel (MP) 3.
60kg: Sahil (Har) 1, Udit Patel (MP) 2, Sumit (CHD) & Pravesh (SSCB) 3.
63kg: Chetan (RSPB) 1, Sunny Kumar (Har) 2, Umesh (Del) & Gyanendra (SSCB) 3.
67kg: Sachin (SSCB) 1, Karndeep (Pjb) 2, Anil (RSPB) & Anuj Kumar (Del) 3.
72kg: Kuldeep Malik (RSPB) 1, Ankit Gulia (SSCB) 2, Mahesh Rathore (MP) & Saurav Rana (UP) 3.
77kg: Aman (SSCB) 1, Amit Kumar (Jhkd) 2, Sagar Thakran (Del) & Lovepreet Singh (RSPB) 3.
82kg: Prince (Har), Rahul (SSCB) 2, Rohit Dahiya (RSPB) & Aniket Jadhav (Mah) 3.
87kg: Rohit (RSPB) 1, Karan Kamboj (Pjb) 2, Vijay (Har) & Rohit Bura (SSCB) 3.
97kg: Nitesh (RSPB) 1, Amit Chaudhary (Raj) 2, Deepanshu (SSCB) & Viresh Kundu (UP) 3.
130kg: Joginder Rathi (Har) 1, Uttam Rana (RSPB) 2, Sonu (Del) & Kuldeep (SSCB) 3.

'Messi's visit a golden moment'

MUMBAI, PTI

Sachin Tendulkar (left) with Lionel Messi in Mumbai on Sunday. REUTERS

Cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar on Sunday termed Argentine football superstar Lionel Messi's visit to Mumbai as a golden moment for the city and the country.

Tendulkar compared the 2011 Cricket World Cup triumph at the same ground with the visit of Messi, along with his Inter Miami team-mates Luis Saurez and Rodrigo de Paul.

"I have spent some incredible moments here. As we call it, Mumbai is a city of dreams. And a number of dreams have seen the finish line here on this very venue. And without your support, we would never have seen those golden moments on this ground in 2011," Tendulkar said referring to India's ODI World Cup triumph in which he played a major role.

"And today, having all three of them here is indeed a golden moment for Mumbai, Mumbaikars and India. The way you have received all three greats of the game has truly been remarkable."

Talking about Messi, he said, "When it comes to Leo, if I have to speak about his game, it wouldn't be the right platform. And you know, what does one talk about him? He has achieved everything. We really admire his dedication, determination, commitment.

"And above all, his humility, the person that he is. And on behalf of Mumbaikars and Indians, I would like to wish him and his family the very best of health and happiness to all of you. Thank you once again for being here and encouraging youngsters."

Tendulkar also hoped that "India also reaches the height that we all aspire to (in football)."

Tendulkar presented a No.10 jersey signed by him to Messi. The Argentine World Cup-winning captain reciprocated with a football.

Messi arrived in Mumbai around noon and will wind up his visit on Monday in New Delhi where he will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Canara Bank win Namdhari Cup

BENGALURU, DHNS: Canara Bank edged past Department of Youth & Empowerment A in a tense final to be crowned champions of the Hockey Karnataka Namdhari Cup.

Following a a 2-2 draw at the end of regulation time, the victors prevailed 5-4 in the shootout here on Sunday.

Harish Mutagar from DYES A opened the scoring and Desh Poovaiah AA doubled it in the 26th minute. On the other end, Canara Bank's Vinaya VS netted their first goal in the 13th before Hitesh Sharma struck in the 55th minute to level the game.

The tournament also saw Hockey Karnataka felicitate Junior World Cup bronze medalist Sunil PB and coach Janardhan along with FIH Umpire of the Year 2025, Raghu Prasad RV.

Results: Canara Bank: 2 (Vinaya VS 13th, Hitesh Sharma 55th) bt Department of Youth Empowerment & Sports A: 2 (Harish Mutagar 12th, Desh Poovaiah AA 26th) via shootout (5-4).

Canara Bank, winners of Hockey Karnataka Namdhari Cup, pose with their spoils on Sunday.

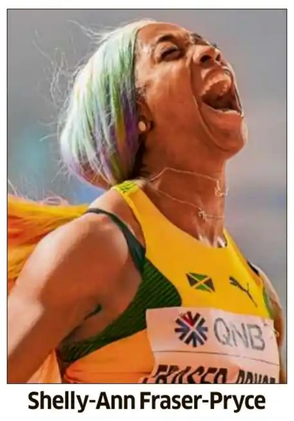
'Hated being called a great starter but not finisher'

PUNE, PTI

Legendary Jamaican sprinter Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce says she hated being labelled "a great starter but not a great finisher," and had to reinvent her running style in her formative years to rise to the elite level.

Fraser-Pryce, an eight time Olympic and 17-time World Championship medallist, said she put in a lot of effort in 200m to sharpen her 100m sprint race in which she owns the third-fastest time in history at 10.6s.

"I had to really reinvent the way I ran, growing up in high school to becoming an elite sprinter because how I ran wasn't ideal, it wasn't going to make me win races," Fraser-Pryce, a brand ambassador of the Bajaj Pune Marathon, said.



Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce

"People would say 'man, she's a great starter but not a great finisher' and I used to hate hearing those things, because I'm like, 'but I can finish too!'."

"I had to get stronger in the gym. I had to do more 200m if I wanted my 100m to be better. I really had to put myself out there, challenge myself more and come out of my comfort zone."

"I used to literally run and fall on my face. I had to learn and relearn how to stay upright, strike the ground, swing my arms and go forward. For me, yes people talk about your height and say 'oh you're too short' but that wasn't something that I could control."

Fraser-Pryce, a.k.a. "Pocket Rocket" who is also the oldest to win a world title at 35, proudly looks back at her career for being involved in so many "talking points".

Kavya wins main event

MUMBAI RESULTS

MK Jadhav-trained Kavya, ridden by David Allan, won the Indian 1000 Guineas, the feature event of the Mumbai races on Sunday.

1. RJ Kolah Trophy - 2000M: Evaldo (Manojj Kumar) David Allan 1; Shubanar (Trevor Patel) 2; Charlie (Bhawani Singh) 3; Wb: 4- 3/4, 1-1/2L. T: 2:01.52. TB: Aman Altaf Hussain. Fav: Evaldo.

2. MN Nazir Trophy - 1600M: Break Point (Jatin L Trivedi) Akshay Kumar 1; Eagle Day (G Vivek) 2; Treat (Neeraj Rawal) 3; Substantial (Sandesh) 4; Wb: Hd, 2-1/4, 1L . T: 1:37.22. TB: Pradeep Chouhan. Fav: Break Point.

3. Mahalakshmi Sprint Million - 1200M: Jade (Vijay B Shirkde) G Vivek 1; Miss American Pie (David Allan) 2; Credence (Yash Narredu) 3; Christophany (Neeraj Rawal) 4; Wb: 1/2, 1-1/2, 3/4L. 1:09.56. TB: Pesi Shroff. Fav: Constable.

4. Indian 1000 Guineas - 1600M: Kavya (Prashant Nagar) David Alllan 1; Fynbos (Trevor Patel) 2; Social Butterfly (Sandesh) 3; Fourth Wing (Akshay Kumar) 4; Wb: 1/2, 1-1/2L, Shd. T: 1:35.61. TB: MK Jadhav. Fav: Fynbos.

5. Jehangir P Dubash Trophy - 1000M: Foxy (Jaydev Mody) Aditya Waydande 1; Bee Magical (Neeraj Rawal) 2; Moonlight Kiss (Mustakim Alam) 3; Storm Cloud (Avinash Paswan) 4; Wb: 1-3/4, 3/4L, Shd. T: 0:57.47. TB: Behram Cama. Fav: Elusive Art.

6. Korea Racing Authority Trophy - 1400M: Ashwa Gypsy (Ravinder Pal Singh) Harudas Gore 1; Star Impact (G.Vivek) 2; Chelsea (Zervan) 3; Red Mist (Ramswarup) 4; Wb: 1-1/2, 3-1/2, 3/4L. T: 1-23.33. TB: Sanjay Kolse. Fav: Ashwa Gypsy.

Bengaluru dividends:
I race: Rs 16w; Fc: Rs 182; fc: Rs 23. shp: Rs 16;
II race: Rs 19w; 12, 15p; Fc: Rs 34; Q: Rs 10. Shp: Rs 17; .Thp: Rs 17; Tri: Rs 49 & 48.
III race: Rs 31w; 12, 14, 10p; Fc: Rs 81; Q: Rs 48; Shp: Rs 35; Thp: Rs 36; Tri: Rs 184 & 84; Ex: Rs 776 & 297.
IV race: Rs 42w; 14, 10, 22p: Fc: Rs 99. Q: Rs 31; Shp: Rs 42; Thp: Rs 45; Tri: Rs 488 & 375;. Ex: Rs 1,943 & 813.
V race: Rs 42w; 12, 12, 37p; Fc: Rs 114; Q: Rs 48; Shp: Rs 31; Thp: Rs 104; Tri: Rs 1,557 & 1,138; Ex: Rs 8,479 & 1,615.
VI race: Rs 47w; 22, 17, 28p; Fc: Rs 140; Q: Rs 55; Shp: Rs 38; Thp: Rs 63; Tri: Rs 915 & 676; Ex: Rs 2,804 & 1,149.
Jackpot: Rs 11,143 (60). **Runner-up:** Rs 1,378 (208). **Treble:** Rs 1,137 (89).

FOOTBALL EPL

Haaland's double troubles Palace

Win helps Man City close in on table toppers Arsenal

LONDON, AFP

Manchester City closed the gap on Premier League leaders Arsenal as Erling Haaland's double inspired a 3-0 win against Crystal Palace on Sunday.

Pep Guardiola's second-placed side moved within two points of Arsenal after a hard-fought success at Selhurst Park.

Norway striker Haaland opened the scoring late in the first half and England forward Phil Foden netted after the break.

Haaland bagged his 23rd goal in all competitions this season to complete City's fifth successive win in all competitions.

Arsenal's dramatic late win over bottom of the table Wolves on Saturday had put pressure on City to respond and Guardiola's men were up to the task, overcoming a spluttering display in large part because of the quality of their finishing.

City were facing Palace for the first time since their shock FA Cup final defeat against the Eagles at Wembley in May.

Glasner out-witted Guardiola with a tactical masterclass in the final.

But City avenged that loss to keep the title race bubbling ahead of the hectic Christmas period.

The astute Glasner spotted another flaw in City's gameplan this season, noting their defence is vulnerable to pace and passes played in behind them

Yeremy Pino should have exploited City's defensive frailty when Adam Wharton's sublime pass sent him sprinting clear of the visitors' creaky offside trap, but his shot smashed off the crossbar with just Gianluigi Donnarumma to beat.

With Palace set up to neutralise City's attacks, Guardiola's men struggled to find any rhythm for long periods and Pino threatened again with a low shot that forced Donnarumma into action.

It took City half an hour to muster their first shot on target as Foden's free-kick was parried by Dean Henderson.

Erling Haaland (second from right) scores Manchester City's first goal during their 3-0 win over Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park in London on Sunday. REUTERS

Gunners survive

Arsenal avoided a major embarrassment against Premier League bottom club Wolves on Saturday, benefiting from two own goals -- one in stoppage time -- to move five points clear of Manchester City.

Mikel Arteta's men were blunt in the first half, failing to muster a single shot on target as Gabriel Martinelli wasted a clutch of chances.

The Arsenal boss made three changes shortly before the hour mark, bringing on Leandro Trossard, Martin Odegaard and Mikel Merino for Martinelli, Eberechi Eze and Martin Zubimendi.

Result: Crystal Palace: 0 lt to Manchester City: 3 (Haaland 41st, 89th-pen, Foden 69th); Nottingham Forest: 3 (Hudson-Odoi 28th, 50th, Sangare 79th) bt Tottenham: 0; Sunderland: 1 (Woltemade 46th-og) bt Newcastle: 0; West Ham: 2 (Fernandes 1st, Bowen 24th) lt to Aston Villa: 3 (Mavropanos 9th-og, Rogers 50th, 79th).

On Saturday: Arsenal: 2 (Johnstone 70th own goal, Mosquera 90th+4 own goal) bt Wolves: 1 (Arokodare 90th).

Kiran, Unnati reign supreme

CUTTACK, PTI

Top seed Unnati Hooda and Kiran George delivered commanding performances to clinch the women's and men's singles titles respectively in the Odisha Masters Super 100 tournament here on Sunday.

Hooda was a picture of composure as she defeated compatriot Isharani Baruah 21-17, 21-10 in just over half an hour. The 18-year-old shuttler controlled the rallies from the outset, denying Baruah the momentum that had powered her impressive run in the BWF World Tour event.

Despite the loss, Baruah capped a memorable week with a well-earned silver medal after a series of standout performances at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.

The men's singles final witnessed a gripping contest with second seed George prevailing over Indonesia's Muhamad Yusuf 21-14, 13-21, 21-16 in a hard-fought battle that lasted 65 minutes.

George took the opening game before Yusuf fought back to level the match. Showing resilience and tactical clarity, George closed out the decider to secure the title.

Indonesia enjoyed success in the mixed doubles, where Marwan Faza and Aisyah Pranata defeated compatriots Dejan Ferdinansyah and Bernadine Wardana 21-15, 21-10.

It was double delight for India as Kiran George (right) and Unnati Hooda won the men's and women's singles titles respectively at the Odisha Masters on Sunday. X

Bengaluru's Pragathi Gowda (left) and co-driver Chandramouli M are all smiles after winning a rally round in the INRC2 class of the K1000 in Tumakuru on Sunday.

Bengaluru's Pragathi makes history

BENGALURU , DHNS

Bengaluru's Pragathi Gowda created history by becoming the first woman driver to win a rally round in the FMSCI Indian National Rally Championship (INRC) Category 2 of the iconic K1000 Rally in Tumakuru on Sunday.

Meanwhile, Dean Mascarenhas and co-driver Gagan Karumbaiah delivered another commanding drive to tame the long and punishing stages of the iconic K1000 Rally, completing a hat-trick of wins and sealing a dominant one-two finish for TSI Racing.

Provisional final results: Overall: Dean Mascarenhas/ Gagan Karumbaiah 1:46:27.3, 1; Adithya Thakur / Virendar Kashyap 1:49:18.9, 2; Shashank Jamwal/ Raghuram S (Coimbatore) 1:52:13.7, 3.
INRC2: Pragathi Gowda/ Chandramouli M 02:05.44.0, 1.
INRC3: Shashank/ Raghuram S. 1; Vishak B/ Chiranth Jain 1:53:20.8, 2; Jenu Johnson/ Lenin Joseph 1:55:42.8, 3.
INRC 3T: Naveen Puligilla/ Santhosh R Thomas 2:01:36.1, 1; Thejas S/ Ravindra Kumar 2:05:57.6, 2; Ramcharan C/ Vignesh Mahalingam 2:12:49.1, 3.
Junior INRC: Abhin Rai/ Moideen Jasheer 1:59:02.7, 1; Abhimanyu Sajeevan/ Avinash CA 1:59:18.7, 2; Ajay Sanker/ Venu Rameshkumar V 2:12:29.9, 3.
Women's class: Athira Murali/ Arun Chakkalakkal 1:58:21.9, 1; Phoebe Nongrum Dale/ Sanath G 2:07:20.6, 2; Tarushi Vikram/ Vybhav Mukund Rao 2:41:12.8, 3.
Classic Challenge Cup: Siddartha Santosh/ Sawan Sathyanarayan 2:16:31.0, 1; Pramod Raman/ Saravana Kumar 2:27:55.3, 3.
Gypsy Challenge: Sachin Singh/ Supreet Sagar 2:11:04.1, 1; Chethan Chengappa/ Prakash Muthusaamy 2:11:18.1, 2; Thomas Marattukalam/ Ashvin Gururaj 2:13:27.6, 3.

Raphinha brace extends Barca lead

BARCELONA, AFP: Raphinha hit a brace to give Barcelona a narrow 2-0 win over Osasuna on Saturday and take them seven points clear at the top of La Liga.

The Brazilian winger broke the deadlock after 70 minutes with a strike from the edge of the box to earn Barca their seventh-straight top flight win.

Second place Real Madrid visit Alaves on Sunday, aiming to cut the gap on the champions back down to four points.

Barca lacked their usual sparkle but ground out their victory, keeping a first clean sheet in six matches across all competitions. They also recorded a fifth victory in five games at their partially reopened Camp Nou home.

"(The win) has a lot of merit, they were well organised, it was hard to find a way through. With patience and a lot of possession, we finally did it," Barca defender Gerard Martin told Movistar.

Result: Barcelona: 2 (Raphinha 70th, 86th) bt Osasuna: 0.

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